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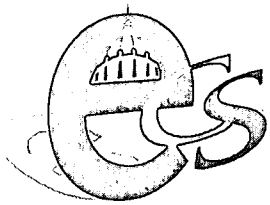
ABSTRACT

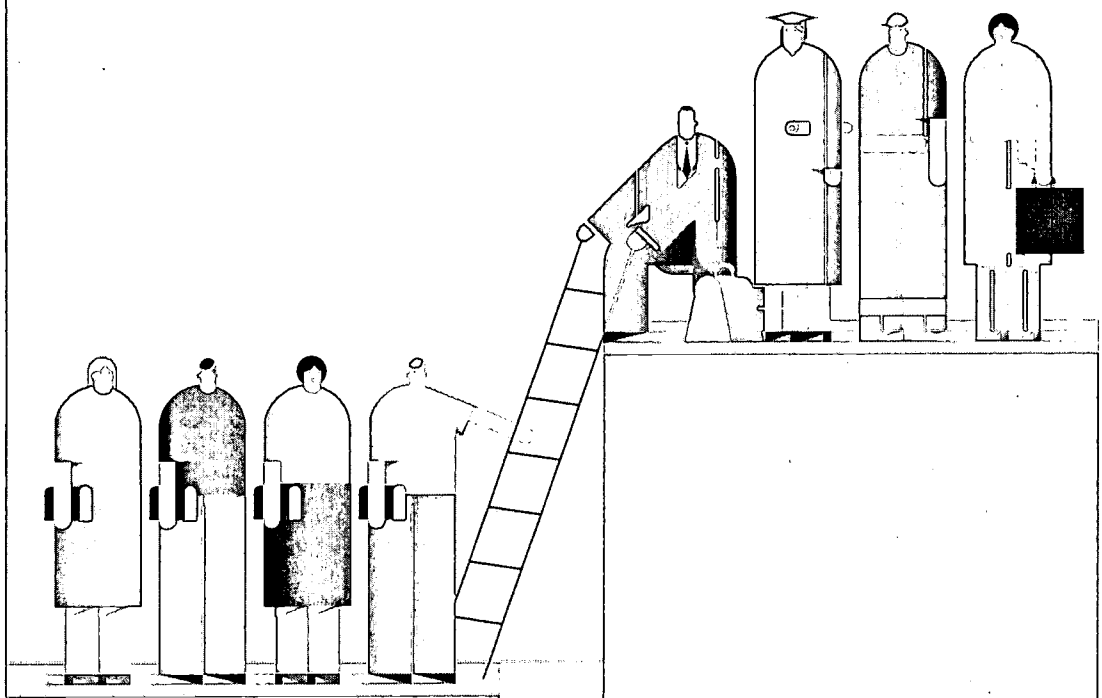
This report documents the risks that the current level of postsecondary performance poses for U.S. ability to raise educational attainment over the next decade. It examines the nature and extent of postsecondary participation in the United States currently, relates that information to certain social and economic characteristics of the population, and describes ways in which the outcomes can vary state to state. The report also offers some priorities for state policy action. Included with the report is "Closing the College Participation Gap: U.S. Profile," an initial look at performance and conditions in the United States. Three appendixes that pertain to the study and the U.S. profile are included as well. Appendix A is a set of questions and answers about the Closing the Gap study. Appendix B provides definitions and data sources, and Appendix C contains 50-state comparative tables for each of the indicators. (Contains 11 references.) (SLD)



Education Commission of the States

Closing the College Participation Gap

A National Summary



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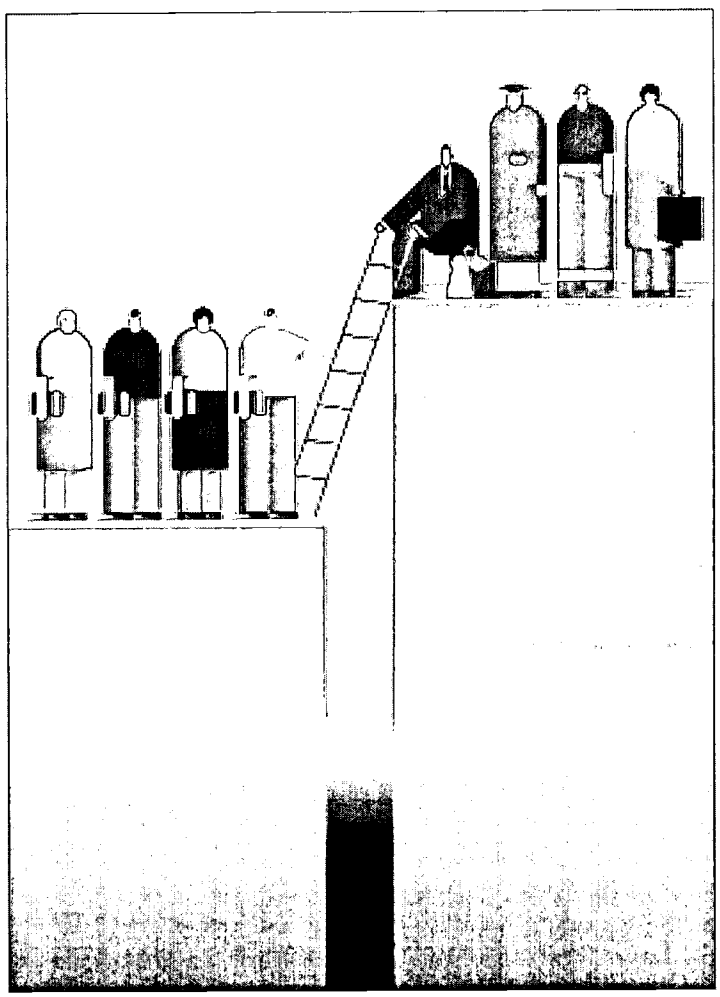
Closing the College Participation Gap

A National Summary

By Sandra S. Ruppert



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Center for Community College Policy

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What might future college enrollments in the United States be if the current rate of participation were to remain static? According to the best estimates from Census 2000, the number of students who enter postsecondary education would increase by about 2.3 million students to reach a total of more than 19.6 million enrollments by 2015.

Now consider what might happen to future college enrollments if we, as a nation, were to match the participation rate of the top-performing states: A boost of an additional 8 million students. That number is what is referred to in this report as the national college participation gap – the difference between two scenarios of future postsecondary participation, both of which take into account projected demographic changes. In one scenario, the current participation rate is maintained; in the other, the rate is improved. What it boils down to is that by 2015, millions more Americans who are not projected currently to benefit from a college education would be able to acquire the postsecondary education and training needed to live more prosperous and productive lives.

Consider what might happen to future college enrollments if we, as a nation, were to match the participation rate of the top-performing states: A boost of an additional 8 million students.

Why think about the need to increase enrollments when we already stand at record numbers and resources are tight? Who isn't currently being served by the nation's postsecondary systems and whom will we need to reach in the future? What would we gain from an increased investment in postsecondary education? What might be the consequences if we stay the course with no measurable improvement in performance?

These questions form the basis for this report. *Closing the College Participation Gap: A National Summary* is a product of the Education Commission of the States' (ECS) Center for Community College Policy. It is a component of the Closing the College Participation Gap study, an ECS initiative supported through a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The initiative's aim is to assist policymakers and other state leaders in their efforts to expand college access and increase participation, particularly among underserved and disadvantaged populations. A related objective is to examine the role of community colleges in helping to respond to states' postsecondary education and training needs.

Other products of this initiative include *Closing the College Participation Gap: State Profiles* and the following two commissioned reports: *Narrowing Gaps in Educational Attainment Within States: A Policymaker's Guide to Assessing and Responding to Needs for Community College Services*, by Aims C. McGuinness Jr. and Dennis P. Jones, and *The Adult Learning Gap: Why States Need To Change Their Policies Toward Adult Learners* by Alice Anne Bailey and James R. Mingle. All these products are available on the ECS Web site at www.ecs.org/ccpaccess and also available for purchase.

Acknowledgments

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ECS Communications staff Josie Canales, Kindle Merrell, Kim Sharpe, Sherry Freeland Walker and Suzanne Weiss edited and provided public relations and dissemination efforts for this paper and other products resulting from this project. Sharon Sherman and Christine Herbert of GBSM Inc. provided public relations support. Lex Papesh designed and formatted the U.S. and state profiles, created the cover illustration and oversaw publication. Finally, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, particularly Gail D. McClure, helped make this report possible through its generous support of the initiative.

ECS welcomes your comments and reactions to this report and other components of the Closing the College Participation Gap initiative.

October 2003

Introduction

A record 17.3 million people in the United States age 18 and older are enrolled in college, according to Census 2000. If current trends continue, another 2.3 million will be added to the rolls by 2015, pushing the total to more than 19.6 million students – an increase of nearly 13% over 2000 levels.

In today's highly competitive global marketplace, human capital is the coin of the realm.

As impressive as those numbers might seem, they are not good enough. The fact is that if current trends persist and students in the United States continue to enroll in college at the rate they do now, America is likely to slip further behind the growing number of developed nations that have stepped up their efforts over the last decade to increase educational attainment among their citizens. While the United States has been mostly in a holding pattern, other countries have surged ahead. Canada, Korea and Sweden are among those that have posted dramatic gains in rates of high school graduation and college-degree attainment.

How the United States stacks up against other industrialized nations matters because in today's highly competitive global marketplace, human capital is the coin of the realm. Educational attainment, measured in terms of the *highest degree or level of schooling attained by the adult population*, is the international currency used to assess the strength of a country's economy and its standard of living. Higher levels of attainment – particularly education and training beyond high school (also referred to here as "college" or "postsecondary education") – have been correlated with myriad social and economic benefits such as higher per-capita earnings, an increase in health, family income and civic participation, and a reduction in crime and child poverty.

There is good reason to question, however, whether the nation will be able to maintain even the current level of performance in the coming years. In a growing number of states, people's opportunity to obtain a postsecondary education – as well as the state's ability to provide one – is being seriously challenged. The risk is that competing public priorities and shrinking resources will put access to an affordable and high-quality college education further out of reach for more and more Americans. The participation gap that separates those with access to college from those without it is threatening to widen.

The year 2003 marks the 20th anniversary of the landmark publication *A Nation at Risk*, and on a number of counts, the title still fits. The depiction in the concise 36-page report of this nation's "mediocre educational performance" and the threat it posed to U.S. economic competitiveness still rings true today. But there's at least one significant difference between then and now that has effectively reframed the issue: The bar for what passes as an acceptable level of educational attainment has been raised. Twenty years ago, a high school diploma was all that was needed to secure a spot in the middle class; today, a postsecondary education is mandatory. The majority of new jobs created since 1983 that pay a livable wage now require some form of education and training beyond high school.

The challenge is not only to accommodate a greater number of students, but also to increase the proportion of the population that goes to college and successfully completes its learning goals.

Demand for postsecondary education and training is expected to increase substantially over the next decade as the full impact of demographic and economic forces is felt. Demographic shifts in the age structure of the population alone are enough to ensure that the number of college students will climb, but it is the participation rate that we really need to watch. The challenge the nation faces is to accommodate not only a greater *number* of students, but also to increase the *proportion* of the population that goes to college and successfully completes its learning goals.

It is the need to raise the nation's educational attainment levels and ensure that all citizens who want a college education can obtain one that is the driving force behind the Education Commission of the States' (ECS) efforts to help states expand college access and increase participation, especially among underserved and disadvantaged populations. It is also the purpose of this report.

The primary audience for this report is ECS' core constituency of state policymakers – governors, legislators, chief state school officers and postsecondary education officials. Although responsibility must be shared with the federal government and with students themselves, state policymakers will need to take the lead because of their primary role in setting policy and funding public

Although the responsibility must be shared, state policy-makers will need to take the lead because of their primary role in setting policy and funding public postsecondary education in their states.

postsecondary education in their states. Each state's unique historical and political context will help shape the specific nature of actions designed to meet educational needs. ECS' efforts are directed toward mobilizing the state policy community's ability to respond to the challenge.

This report documents the risks that the current level of postsecondary performance poses for the nation's ability to raise educational attainment over the next decade. It examines the nature and extent of postsecondary participation in the United States currently, relates that information to certain social and economic characteristics of the population, and describes ways in which the outcomes can vary state to state. The report also offers some priorities for state policy action. Included with this report is *Closing the College Participation Gap: U.S. Profile*, which is designed as an initial look at performance and conditions in the United States. Three appendices that pertain to the study and the U.S. profile are included as well. Appendix A is a set of questions and answers about the Closing the College Participation Gap study. Appendix B provides definitions and data sources for the indicators that appear on the profile. Appendix C contains 50-state comparative tables for each of the indicators.

U.S. Census data, particularly the state files contained in Summary File 3 of Census 2000, released in mid-2002, serve as the primary source of information for this report. The decennial census is a comprehensive and reliable compendium of standardized information about social and economic characteristics of the U.S. population at the turn of the decade. Additionally, ECS' analysis drew on other published national and international data and information sources such as those produced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the U.S. Department of Education.

Signs of Trouble

Three "warning signs" call attention to the risks that current postsecondary performance poses for raising educational attainment in the future:

WARNING SIGN #1 – THE UNITED STATES IS FALLING BEHIND OTHER INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES IN COLLEGE PARTICIPATION AND OTHER CRITICAL MEASURES OF POSTSECONDARY ACCESS AND ATTAINMENT.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) issues an annual report that compares the performance of 32 industrialized nations on an array of educational measures.[1] In 2000, the United States was tied for 13th place in the percentage of the population that entered postsecondary education leading to a bachelor's degree or higher; was tied for 7th place for entry into postsecondary education leading to less than a baccalaureate degree; and ranked 4th in the participation rate for continuing education among adults age 25-64. What are some of the factors that account for our current lackluster performance, and what implications do they hold for the future?

- **Stagnant levels of high school attainment keep the United States in a holding pattern while other nations surge ahead.** The United States' lower standing compared to certain other countries is in part the result of its failure to produce high school graduates at a competitive rate. The nation currently ranks 10th in the percent of students *of typical age* who graduate high school. But among adults age 25-64 the United States continues to dominate in the proportion that has completed a high school education. Other countries are gaining rapidly on America, though, because they've stepped up efforts to improve attainment levels among their younger populations. While the United States is still first among nations in the percent of 45- to 54-year-olds who have at least a high school credential, it drops to ninth place when it comes to the percent of 25- to 34-year-olds who have completed high school.

- **It no longer holds true that each succeeding American generation will be better educated than the one that preceded it.** After decades of rapid growth, increases in attainment have begun to level off. The proportion of the population age 25 and older that has completed high school or obtained a college degree has climbed steadily, and often dramatically, every decade since the Census Bureau began keeping records. In 1980, for example, 66% of the adult population had a high school education and 16% had a bachelor's degree or more. Today, those numbers are 80% and 24%, respectively.

  But averages based on attainment of the total adult population tell only a part of the story. When disaggregated by age, the results reveal that younger adults ages 25-34 are now less likely to have

attained either a high school credential or a college degree than their older counterparts, age 45-54. The fact that baby-boomers – people born between 1946 and 1964 – are being replaced by a generation that is both smaller in number and no better educated has chilling implications for the future productivity of the U.S. labor force, among other things.

- **Plain and simple, education pays: A college education is associated with better access to employment and higher earnings.** Unemployment rates for workers who have a high school diploma are 50% higher than for holders of an associate's degree, and twice that of those who have a bachelor's degree or more. Over a lifetime the added economic value of a college education is reflected in earning differences among workers based on their level of education.[2] Although earnings increase with each step up the education ladder, gaps in income inequality have widened during the last 20 years as less-educated workers have experienced a drop in real wages, while those with higher levels of attainment have tended to increase their earnings. Individuals with a baccalaureate degree earn on average 40% more – the equivalent of $900,000 – over a lifetime than those who hold only a high school credential.

WARNING SIGN #2 – CURRENT GAPS IN COLLEGE PARTICIPATION AND ATTAINMENT BASED ON AGE, RACE, ETHNICITY AND INCOME SUGGEST A GREATER NUMBER OF PEOPLE SOON MAY BE AT RISK OF LOSING ACCESS TO A COLLEGE EDUCATION.

Three fast-growing and overlapping segments of the population are likely to be most at risk for losing access to a college education. They include adults, particularly those with lower education levels; low-income populations; and members of certain ethnic groups, particularly those who identify themselves on Census forms as black or African American or of Hispanic or Latino origin. The challenge will be to increase participation and attainment levels of these populations.

- **Participation in adult education has grown, but it serves only a small fraction of those who need it most.** Participation in all forms of adult education, which includes job training, degree programs and basic education (such as literacy, General Educational Development [GED] or English-as-a-Second-Language programs) has risen over the last decade, according to the U.S. Department of Education.[3] There remains, however, a gap in the rate at which adults participate based on their level of education. For example, in 1999, the most recent year for which data are available, only 22% of high school dropouts participated in adult learning activities, compared to 36% of high school graduates, 54% of people who had some college and 64% of holders of a bachelor's degree or higher. In other words, adults who may need educational services the most also are those least likely to receive them.[4]

Baby-boomers are being replaced by a generation that is both smaller in number and no better educated.

- **Despite some gains in postsecondary participation and attainment, wide disparities by race and ethnicity persist.** On nearly every measure of educational and economic attainment there are wide disparities between Hispanic and black populations, on the one hand, and their white, non-Hispanic counterparts. The problem is particularly acute for the Hispanic population: An alarming 48% of Hispanics age 25 and older lack a high school credential, compared to 20% for the population as a whole and 15% for the white race alone, according to Census 2000. Similarly, college attainment levels of the adult Hispanic population are lower than those of other racial and ethnic groups. Complicating the matter is the sizable influx of Hispanic or Latino immigrants, who make up the largest share of legal immigration to the United States each year and who sometimes arrive with relatively low levels of formal education.

  Hispanics, along with Asians, are fueling the nation's rapid increase in racial and ethnic diversity. As the fastest-growing ethnic group in the United States, the Hispanic population is expected to increase by nearly 50% between 2000 and 2015. One recent study estimates that as many as a half-million additional Hispanic youth ages 18-24 will enroll in college by 2015.[5] Put in economic terms, the study suggests that closing the gap in postsecondary participation and attainment between this group and their non-Hispanic white counterparts could add another $45.5 billion annually to U.S. coffers.

- **Money matters: The higher a family's income, the more likely it is to send a high school graduate to college.** According to the U.S. Department of Education, the higher the family income of high school graduates, the more likely the graduate is to enroll in college.[6] To be clear, low-income students also tend to be less college qualified. But even so, among those who are college qualified, participation rates vary according to family income. Although income inequality grew more slowly during much of the last decade, the richest families continued to pull away from the rest of the pack. The

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result is that the price of college rose substantially as a percent of real family income only for low-income families. Studies have shown that lower-income students are especially sensitive to changes in price, because their ability to finance a college education weighs so heavily in their decisions about where or even whether to pursue one.[7] Gaps in participation between low-income students and their middle- and upper-class peers are likely to grow wider as tuition levels increase.

WARNING SIGN #3 – DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC FORCES ARE CONVERGING TO LIMIT STATES' ABILITY TO PROTECT – MUCH LESS EXPAND – COLLEGE ACCESS OVER THE NEXT DECADE.

Within state policy circles, postsecondary education has become known as the "budget balancer." Unlike the federal government, which can carry over a deficit from year to year, every state but Vermont has a balanced-budget requirement as part of its state constitution. When budget times get tight, state policymakers are more likely to treat appropriations for postsecondary education as "discretionary" since most are aware that alternative sources of revenue can be tapped, mainly student tuition and fees.

The rate at which tuition increases annually tends to fluctuate in sync with state budget cycles, but overall the price of college keeps climbing.

- **It's boom or bust: Postsecondary education takes a disproportionate share of state budget hits in an economic downturn.** Historically, postsecondary education has been subject to widely fluctuating funding cycles, faring better than other major spending categories during good economic times and disproportionately worse in a downturn. In what frequently has been described as the worst economy since World War II, it is easy to forget that only three years ago states were enjoying record surpluses as part of the longest economic expansion in history. Consequently, the 2001 fiscal year (FY01) was the third (and final) year in which state policymakers appropriated on average a 7% increase in postsecondary education operating funds.[8]

  FY04, which began July 2003 in most states, is already shaping up to be quite different. Although some state fiscal officers are predicting a slight rebound in tax revenues, the economy continues to slump. State budget shortfalls are likely to reach upward of $80 billion in FY04. All told, during the last three years, states have had to close a cumulative $200 billion budget gap, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. While four or five states have managed to avoid posting budget deficits, the majority have had to cut spending as a way to deal with them. According to the State Higher Education Executive Officers, about half the states have reduced higher education appropriations for the 2003-04 academic year by approximately 5% on average.

- **Most states will find it increasingly difficult even to maintain postsecondary education's current level of service.** As early as July 1999, the handwriting was on the wall: For all but a few states, sustaining postsecondary education's level of service would require support that outpaced projected revenues.[9] A study conducted this year by the Rockefeller Institute came to the same conclusion based on its analysis of projections over the next eight years. "States, and postsecondary education, in particular, are likely to face very tight budget conditions for the next decade," reports the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), which commissioned the study.[10] Even if steady revenue growth resumes, nearly every state will still find it "impossible," according to Dennis Jones, president of NCHEMS, to continue funding the current level of service based on existing tax structures. This is due in part to increased expenditures for K-12 education, homeland security, corrections and health care, particularly Medicaid, which is expected to increase by about 10% each year over the next decade.

- **The general rule of thumb is the less money that comes from states the more that has to come from students, their families and other revenue sources.** Ultimately, state budget cuts may end up hurting students the most. The rate at which tuition increases annually tends to fluctuate in sync with state budget cycles, but overall the price of college keeps climbing. Adjusted for inflation, tuition at public four-year colleges and universities increased at four times the pace of median family income during the last decade. For the 2002-03 academic year, college tuition and mandatory fees increased in every state, reports the College Board.[11] Although there is wide variation among states, tuition jumped an average of 9.6% at public four-year institutions, 5.8% at four-year private institutions and 7.9% at public two-year colleges. At the same time, state grant funding (which accounts for only 6% of total student aid) has doubled over the decade. More than three-quarters of state aid is need-based, which grew by 60% during that time. Appropriations for non-need-based or "merit-based" aid, however, are growing at an even faster pace.

All Eyes on the Future

The repercussions from this extraordinary set of national and state circumstances are being felt on college campuses across the country. To compensate for budget cuts, public colleges and universities are resorting to drastic measures that include closing programs, increasing class sizes, cutting course offerings and limiting enrollments. Even community colleges, the gateway to access for an increasing number of people, are being forced to turn away students.

It remains to be seen whether in fact this tide can be reversed and the states and the nation succeed in expanding college access, increasing participation and raising educational attainment over the next decade, particularly among underserved and disadvantaged populations. It is clear, however, that government, business, postsecondary providers, communities and students all must do their share to help achieve these ambitious goals.

Closing the College Participation Gap: U.S. Profile, which is included with this report, provides a starting point by examining current performance and conditions related to postsecondary access and participation. It is designed to provide a glimpse of who is – and who is not – among the populations being served presently by the nation's postsecondary systems and where the greatest challenges for the future may lie. In addition to the U.S. profile, individual profiles were prepared for each of the 50 states using the same format and data sources. (Both the U.S. and state profiles, along with other related reports in this series, are available through the ECS Web site at www.ecs.org/ccpaccess.)

ECS focuses on *participation rate* as a key indicator of the extent to which states and the nation are preparing their populations with the high level of skills and knowledge that labor markets value and citizens desire. Participation rate also is the measure used internationally to gauge both college accessibility and the value placed on attendance. Enrollment numbers taken at face value can be misleading. It is important to determine, for example, whether increases or decreases in enrollments are the result of demographic changes and/or changes in participation rate.

The profile offers two scenarios of future postsecondary participation, both of which take into account projected demographic changes. In one scenario, the current participation rate is maintained; in the other, the rate is improved. For purposes of this analysis, ECS chose the rate of the top-performing state in each of the age groups –18- to 24-year-olds, and 25 and older – to serve as "benchmarks" for the nation. (Other popular benchmarks include the U.S. average, the rate of a peer state or states, or a designated level of improvement such as a 10% increase in enrollment numbers.) The "participation gap" is the difference in the total number of students projected to be enrolled by 2015 under the two scenarios. For more information on the definitions and data sources for these and other indicators used in the profile, see Appendix B.

Appèndix C contains state comparative tables that allow readers to examine a state's performance and conditions in light of other states. It is important to point out that no one state has all the answers. Understanding why some states do better than others with regard to participation is a complex matter and one that requires looking at a number of different factors that might contribute to a state's performance. An ECS analysis found, for example, that higher participation rates of 18- to 24-year-olds in a particular state in the year 2000 were positively correlated with that state's: (1) percentage of 9th graders four years earlier who performed at or above proficient on national assessments of either math, science, reading or writing; (2) level of college-degree attainment among the adult population; (3) college-going rate of 1999-2000 high school graduates; (4) percentage of fall 2000 college freshmen in-migration; and (5) amount of state grant aid that goes to low-income students. In other words, *academic preparation, aspirations, access* and *affordability* are among the factors that help explain a state's participation rate for traditional-age students.

Following is a sample of findings based on the U.S. profile, viewed in the context of social and economic trends and the variation observed among states:

- **Double-digit percentage increases projected for traditional college-age enrollments during the next decade have captured national attention, but the less-noticed story is that half the states likely will see either little or no growth or an actual decline in their numbers.** On average, the college participation rate for the population of 18- to 24-year-olds is 34%, but it ranges from a high of nearly 48% in Rhode Island to a low of 19% in Alaska. Given demographic changes over the next decade, California is projected to add another half-million traditional-age students – a 41% increase by 2015 – if its current participation rate of 35% is maintained. At the other end of the spectrum, fully half of all states are projected to see either stable enrollment growth of 4% or less, or an actual decline in numbers. Ten states, including Arkansas, Iowa and West Virginia, are likely to experience a decrease in enrollments of this age group by 2015, based on their current rates of participation.

- **It's not just about the kids anymore: Adults now account for nearly half of all college enrollments.** Although adults age 25 and older account for 47% of total enrollments, the rate at which they participate is only about one in every 20, compared to one in every three for 18- to 24-year-olds. But because adults constitute such a large proportion of the population (almost two-thirds of Americans are over the age of 24), the absolute number of adults who attend college rivals that of traditional-age students. California had the highest adult participation rate with 6.4% (1.4 million students enrolled), while West Virginia posted the lowest with 2.8% (35,000 students).

- **Fewer than 38% of 19-year-olds had graduated from high school by 1999-2000 and enrolled in college by fall 2000.** The organization, Postsecondary Education OPPORTUNITY calculates "Chance for College by Age 19" based on its analysis of U.S. Department of Education data. For 2000, state averages ranged from 58.4% in North Dakota to 27.6% in Alaska. Overall, the "chance-for-college" rate has been slipping since 1994, after making steady improvement since the mid-1980s. This is likely the result of commensurate declines in both public high school graduation rates and college continuation rates for recent high school graduates.

- **Nearly 34 million people – 12.4% of the population – live below the poverty line.** In 1999, the percentage of a state's population that lived in poverty ranged from nearly 20% in Louisiana to 6.5% in Connecticut. Considered another way, 3.3 million families in the United States were living below the poverty threshold, which was pegged at roughly $17,000 for a family of four. One in four families headed by single mothers with children under the age of 18 was considered poor. After significant progress in reducing poverty levels during the boom of the late 1990s, the numbers have been steadily creeping upward since the start of the economic recession in March 2001.

- **One of every 10 teenagers between the ages of 16 and 19 is considered a "dropout" – neither a high school graduate nor enrolled in school.** In 2000, there were approximately 1.6 million out-of-school youth who were not high school graduates, and only about half of them were employed. Among states, Nevada had the highest high school dropout rate, at 16%, while North Dakota had the lowest with 4.8%.

- **More than 13 million foreign-born immigrants legally entered the United States during the last decade, but just six states absorbed over half of the growth.** The total number of foreign-born residents of the United States now stands at 31 million, an increase of 64% over 1990 levels. Today, 11% of the U.S. population is foreign born. California was the destination for one-quarter of new immigrants who arrived during the last decade. Other states that received a significant share of immigration from abroad included New York, Texas, Florida, Illinois and New Jersey.

- **Dramatic changes in the age structure of the U.S. population will accompany the aging of the baby-boom generation over the next decade.** According to Census 2000, 35 million Americans, or one in every eight people, are 65 years of age or older. That number is expected to increase by almost one-third to reach a total of 45 million by 2015. Every state is projected to see growth in the number of older citizens, ranging from 6% in Rhode Island to more than 86% in Alaska. This "graying of America" over the next decade will be accompanied by slower growth in the size of the prime working-age population, age 25-64. During the 15-year period between 2000 and 2015, the prime working-age population will increase by only 8.6% compared to a 13% increase that occurred during the previous 10-year span from 1990 to 2000.

State Policy Priorities

These observations, which are based primarily on an analysis of Census 2000 data as displayed in the U.S. profile, suggest that considerable need exists beyond current levels of participation for postsecondary education and training, especially among underserved and disadvantaged populations. The reasons may vary from state to state, but between now and 2015, every state likely will feel the heat to accommodate a larger and more diverse group of students. Closing the gap will mean increasing participation among those who are not projected to benefit from a postsecondary education if current trends persist.

The job of addressing these challenges will fall largely to a set of newly elected state leaders. When the legislative sessions convened in 2003, for example, more than one in every four legislators was new on the job. Overall, there has been an 80% turnover in state legislatures since the 1990s. Among governors, nearly half came into office following the November 2002 mid-term elections.

The following are a few priorities that can assist state policymakers in charting a future course:

- **Get the facts.** Good policy usually begins with good information. Policymakers need to start with reliable data that will help tell the story about performance and conditions in their state. The U.S. and state pro-

files, designed with that objective in mind, provide an initial look based on Census 2000 data. An excellent Web-based resource for comprehensive state-level data useful in postsecondary education policymaking is the National Information Center for Higher Education Policymaking and Analysis (www.higheredinfo.org). This Web site is organized around the same categories as *Measuring Up*, the postsecondary "report card" produced by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

- **Focus first on the needs of learners.** Projections based on demographic and economic trends can be a particularly powerful indicator of future demand for postsecondary education and training. Special attention should be given to identifying and responding to the education needs of underrepresented and fast-growing populations that this and other recent studies have suggested are likely to be at greatest risk of losing access to a college education in the future. Included among them are adults, particularly those with low levels of educational attainment, low-income populations and members of certain racial or ethnic groups.

- **Link educational services to identified needs.** Once policymakers define and analyze the educational needs of their state's population, they can pinpoint with greater precision the availability of education services that will meet those needs. In addition to the variation exhibited across states, significant regional disparities can exist within a state, which statewide averages can mask. In a related ECS-commissioned paper, authors Aims C. McGuinness Jr. and Dennis P. Jones present a method for assessing the needs of "key client groups'" for community college services, and describe the policy tools and strategies available to policymakers who want to address these needs.

- **Target policies that can make a difference.** Factors that affect performance nearly always have policy and practice implications. For example, it is clear that in many states, increasing college participation for 18- to 24-year-olds will depend on reversing the trend toward steadily declining public high school graduation rates. Other factors that may be at work include student motivation, college prices, and access to and availability of learning opportunities, to name a few. Authors Alice Anne Bailey and James R. Mingle, in another ECS-commissioned paper, tackle the issue of adult needs for postsecondary education and training, and identify the federal and state policies that can either inhibit or support greater participation and attainment among adults.

- **Recognize that increased access and participation are means, not ends.** No matter where a person resides along the education spectrum, he or she should have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to live a healthy and productive life. Expanding college access and increasing participation, especially among underserved and disadvantaged populations, are necessary but not sufficient conditions for raising educational attainment levels. The true meaning of access is that all prospective students will be prepared for college, be able to afford the costs of attendance and be successful in achieving their learning goals. Ultimately, the goal to build a nation of learners will be measured in terms of how well the nation is able to educate those most difficult to reach.

Reports in This Series

- *Closing the College Participation Gap: A National Summary* (PS-03-01) (includes the U.S. profile)
- *Closing the College Participation Gap: U.S. Profile* (PS-03-02)
- *The Adult Learning Gap: Why States Need To Change Their Policies Toward Adult Learners* (PS-03-04)
- *Narrowing the Gaps in Educational Attainment Within States: A Policymaker's Guide to Assessing and Responding to Needs for Community College Services* (PS-03-03)

Individual state profiles are available at www.ecs.org/ccpaccess.

For more information on ECS' Closing the College Participation Gap initiative, contact Sandra Ruppert, program director, at sruppert@ecs.org or 303.299.3691.

To order additional copies of this report or the reports listed above, contact the ECS Distribution Center at 700 Broadway, Suite 1200, Denver, CO 80203-3460, call 303.299.3692 or e-mail jivey@ecs.org.

Conclusion

Providing a wide variety of postsecondary learning opportunities for all citizens is critical to both individual and collective well-being. This is the new public mandate of our age, just as extending a high school diploma was to an earlier generation. Without universal and lifelong access to the benefits of a college education, the nation simply will fail to meet the social and economic challenges of the years ahead.

Endnotes

[1] *Education at a Glance – OECD Indicators 2002* (2002). Paris, France: Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development.

[2] Day, Jennifer C., and Eric. C. Newburger (2002, July). *The Big Payoff: Educational Attainment and Synthetic Estimates of Work-Life Earnings.* Washington, DC: The U.S. Census Bureau.

[3] National Center for Education Statistics (2002). *Participation Trends and Patterns in Adult Education: 1991 to 1999,* NCES 2002-119 by Sean Creighton and Lisa Hudson. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, NCES.

[4] For more on this topic, see: Bailey, Alice Anne, and James R. Mingle (2003). *The Adult Learning Gap: Why States Need To Change Their Policies Toward Adult Learners.* Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

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[9] Hovey, Harold A. (1999). *State Spending for Higher Education in the Next Decade: The Battle To Sustain Current Support.* San Jose, CA: The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

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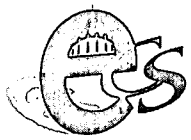


Education Commission of the States

Closing the College Participation Gap

U.S. Profile

Our future well-being doesn't rest *solely* on whether we increase postsecondary participation. But if we don't, our chances for increased prosperity are greatly diminished. Access to affordable and high-quality education and training beyond high school (what we refer to here as "postsecondary education" or "college") is fundamental to our social and economic development, both as individuals and as a society.

Today's definition of a typical college student goes far beyond traditional images of the recent high school graduate who lives on campus and attends full time. It also includes:

- The low-wage or unemployed worker who wants to gain the skills and training necessary to lift her family out of poverty
- The recent immigrant who aspires to learn English and enroll in adult basic education classes so he can become a more productive citizen
- The teacher, scientist, legislator or manager who requires continuing education to advance his or her level of knowledge in a chosen field.

It's likely to include you and me.

But we, as individuals, aren't the only ones who benefit from our investment in education. States and the nation as a whole also reap substantial rewards from having a well-educated citizenry. Personal incomes tend to rise with each step up the education ladder. Among the many perks that flow to states and the nation are increased tax revenues, shrinking welfare rolls and reduced child poverty rates, to name a few.

Equally important as any statistic, though, is the immeasurable contribution advanced education makes toward our efforts at becoming a more humane, literate and civil society.

While none of the foregoing is really news to most people, it does serve as a sobering reminder of what we stand to lose if access to education and training is not protected beyond high school for all who want and need it.

The reality is that the opportunity for many men and women to obtain a postsecondary education – as well as states' ability to provide access to one – is likely to be seriously challenged over the coming years. In some places, it's already happened. The growing ranks of poor or otherwise disadvantaged persons are the ones affected most when this occurs.

In a majority of states, the elements of a "perfect storm" are gathering. State budget deficits have accelerated a decrease in the proportion of state funds allocated for postsecondary education and training. Student tuition and fees are also on the rise, while financial aid for needy students wanes. These events are occurring at the same time that demand is projected to grow across all age groups as shifting demographics collide with the effects of a lagging economy.

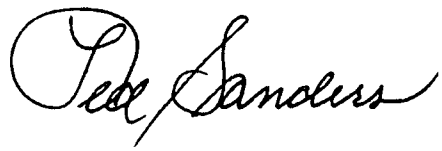
State leaders are overloaded with urgent priorities right now, yet it remains vital to <u>all</u> our futures to protect access to postsecondary education.

The reasons will vary state to state, but it's likely every state will face mounting pressure over the next decade not only to preserve access at current levels but also to *expand* it to accommodate changing needs.

Clearly, state policy leaders are overloaded with urgent priorities right now – homeland security, welfare reform, health care and K-12 education, among them. State budgets in FY04 promise to be even leaner than in previous years.

Yet it remains vital to <u>all</u> our futures that states take steps to protect postsecondary access now and prepare to serve a larger and more diverse group of students during the years ahead. Closing the college participation gap that separates those with access from those without it is not simply a matter of good economics; it's about our quality of life as well.

How to get started? – With reliable information about performance and current conditions in your state and in the nation. This U.S. profile is designed to help in that effort.



Ted Sanders, ECS President
October 2003

UNITED STATES

To reach benchmark by 2015, the U.S. must provide *expanded* postsecondary access to:

students age 18–24 4,202,609
students age 25+ 3,841,765
Participation Gap: 8,044,374 new postsecondary students

What is the "Participation Gap"?

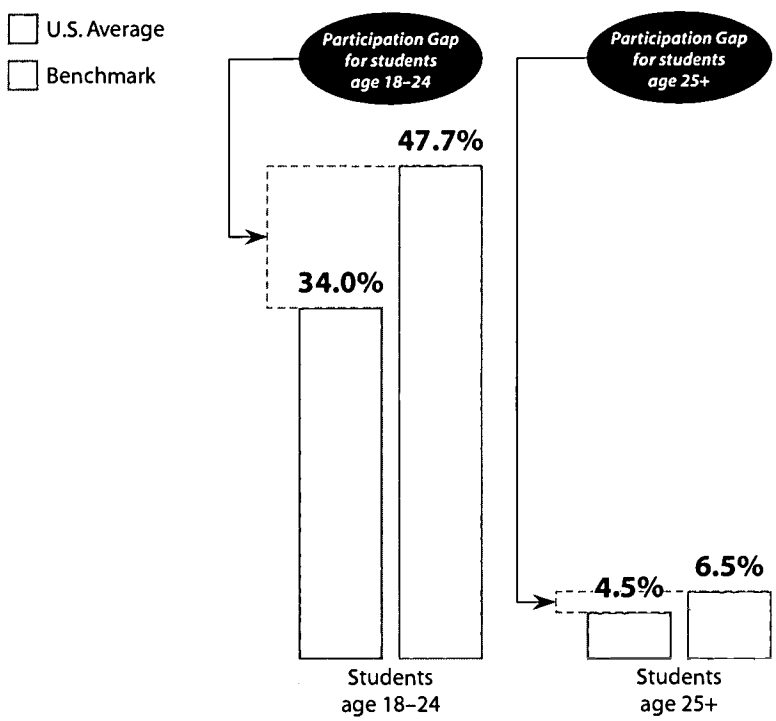
The total number of *additional* students the U.S. would need to enroll by 2015, given demographic projections, if it were to match the participation rate of the best-performing ("benchmark") states.

Postsecondary Participation

Student age	# of students in 2000	projected # of students in 2015 *at current rate*	% change 2000–15 *at current rate*	projected # of students in 2015 *at benchmark rate*	% change 2000–15 *to reach benchmark*	**Participation Gap** *in 2015*
18–24	9,169,305	10,365,435	+13%	14,568,044	+59%	**4,202,609**
25+	8,179,962	9,226,735	+13%	13,068,500	+60%	**3,841,765**
All (18+)	**17,349,267**	**19,592,170**	**+13%**	**27,636,544**	**+59%**	**8,044,374**

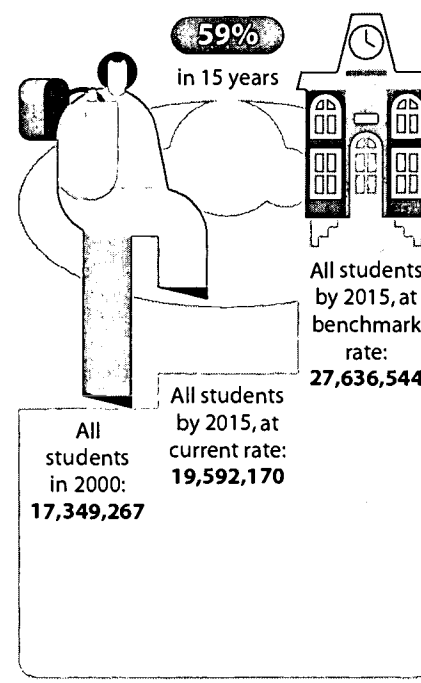
Based on the U.S. Census 2000 questionnaire, **postsecondary participation** means a person residing in the U.S. who attended a public or private degree-granting college or university at any time since February 2000.

Current Participation Rates

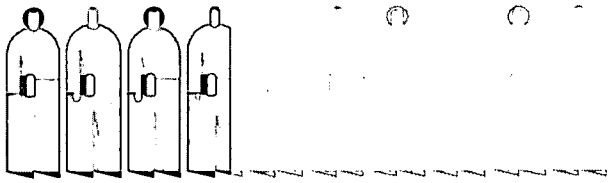


By closing the Participation Gap,

the number of students age 18+ enrolled in college in the U.S. would grow



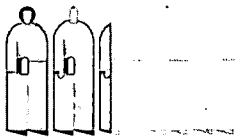
"Chance for College" in the United States



37.5%

That means for every 100 students who enter 9th grade, about **38** are likely to graduate high school four years later and enroll in college within a year.

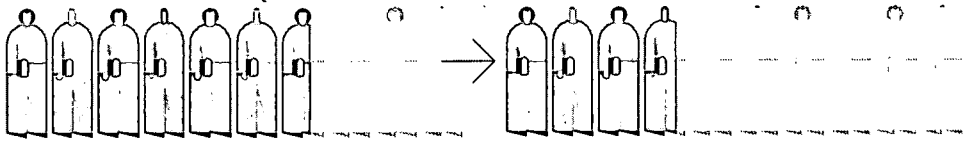
"Chance for College" in the U.S. for low-income students = **23.1%**



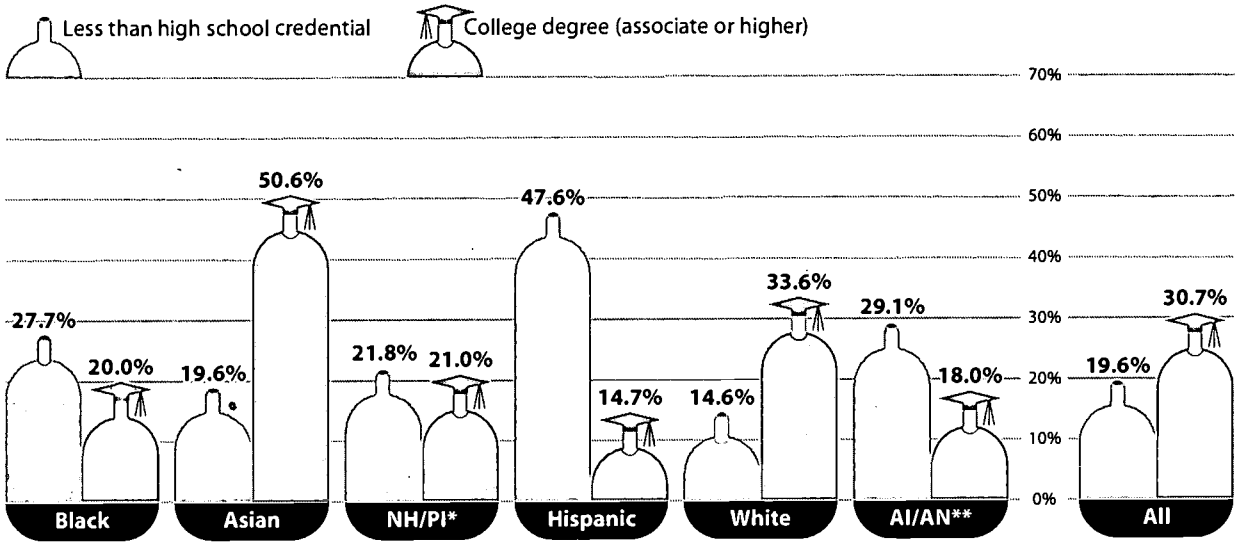
Here's how "Chance for College" is measured:

For every 100 students who enter 9th grade, about **67** are likely to graduate high school four years later.

Of those 67 students who graduate high school, about **38** (or 57%) are likely to enroll in college within a year.



Highest Level of Educational Attainment, Age 25+, by Race/Ethnicity



*Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

**American Indian/Alaska Native

In the U.S. among adults age 25+:

20% have less than a **high school credential**

31% hold a **college degree**

U.S. Snapshot

Population Characteristics

Median family income	$49,242
% in poverty	12.4
% high school dropout	9.9
% minority	30.8
Immigration since 1990	13,140,743
Ratio of rural:urban	1:3.8

Population Projections

	2000	2015	% change
Total population	280,849,847	309,539,524	+10.2%
Age 0–17	72,178,820	74,376,152	+3.0%
Age 18–24	27,070,817	30,434,894	+12.4%
Age 25–64	146,678,355	159,233,372	+8.6%
Age 65+	34,921,855	45,495,106	+30.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2002, except for Chance for College (*Postsecondary Education OPPORTUNITY*, 2002). See www.ecs.org for more detail.

Every Picture Tells a Story

This profile is intended to provide you with a better understanding of the nature and extent of postsecondary participation in the United States, and to relate that information to certain national characteristics.

In addition to the U.S. profile, individual profiles were prepared for each of the 50 states, based on readily available information from 50-state data sources. With the exception of *Chance for College*, all data are from the U.S. Census Bureau, in particular, Summary File 3 of Census 2000, released in mid-2002. (*Chance for College*, which is calculated by the organization, Postsecondary Education OPPORTUNITY, uses U.S. Department of Education data sources.)

Highlights of what's contained in the profile:

On the left-hand page...

...**postsecondary participation** is the focus. This page provides information about current performance and projected demographic changes for the nation for two age groups – 18- to 24-year-olds and 25 years and older. We also identify a potential enrollment target for expanded access and increased participation.

The ***Participation Gap*** is defined as the total number of new students that the United States as a whole would need to enroll between 2000 and 2015 if it were to match the participation rate of the best-performing states. Rhode Island is the top performer for individuals between the ages of 18 and 24. California is tops for those ages 25 and older.

The proportion of the population enrolled in some form of postsecondary education or training is the basis for calculating ***participation rate.*** Participation rate is a measure used internationally to gauge both the accessibility of college as well as the perceived value placed on attendance.

ECS chose the rate of the best-performing state in each age group to establish a high, but realistic, ***benchmark*** for states and the nation. This is not prescriptive: each state will want to determine the appropriate level of access to which it will aspire. Other ways to set enrollment targets include, for example, a comparison to one's peer states or to the national average.

On the right-hand page...

...**national characteristics** are profiled. The page is designed to help identify who is – and who is not – being served by the nation's postsecondary system and to provide clues as to where unmet needs may reside.

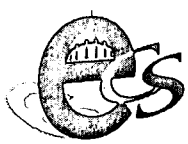
In ***Chance for College,*** for example, concerns about college participation of 18- to 24-year-olds might be traceable to problems that exist with public high school graduation rates or in getting recent graduates to enroll in college. ***Educational Attainment*** levels, on the other hand, are not fixed in young adulthood, and are the yardstick used throughout the world to measure economic growth potential. The ***U.S. Snapshot*** offers population-specific indicators and a glimpse of the projected effects of the demographic process at 2015.

ECS encourages state policymakers to use the information contained in the U.S. and state profiles as a catalyst for planning the future of their states. Since significant disparities can exist between counties or regions, policymakers also will want to consider carefully the varying effects that a given state policy or practice can have on performance across the state.

Ultimately, it's important to remember that expanded access and increased participation rates are not ends in themselves. The true meaning of "access" is that all prospective students will be prepared for college, be able to afford the costs of attendance and be successful in achieving their learning goals.

Closing the College Participation Gap: U.S. Profile is a product of the Education Commission of the States' (ECS) Center for Community College Policy (CCCP). This work is a component of Closing the College Participation Gap, an ECS initiative supported through a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The initiative's aim is to assist state policymakers and other state leaders in their efforts to expand opportunities for postsecondary access and to increase participation, particularly among underserved and disadvantaged populations. A related objective is to examine the role of the community college sector in helping to inform and respond to states' postsecondary education and training needs, particularly those that occur at the less-than-baccalaureate level.

For more information on ECS' Closing the College Participation Gap study, contact Sandra Ruppert, program director, at sruppert@ecs.org or at 303.299.3691. To view the state profiles or other reports in this study, visit the ECS Web site at www.ecs.org/ccpaccess. To order additional U.S. profiles or other reports in this series, contact the ECS Distribution Center at the address below, call 303.299.3692 or e-mail jivey@ecs.org.



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Q. What is the Closing the College Participation Gap study?

A. The Closing the College Participation Gap study is part of a multiyear initiative of the Education Commission of the States' (ECS) Center for Community College Policy (CCCP). Its purpose is to assist state policymakers and other state leaders in their efforts to expand opportunities for postsecondary access and increase participation, especially among underserved and disadvantaged populations. A related objective is to examine the role of the community college sector in responding to and informing state educational needs, particularly those that occur at the less-than-baccalaureate level. The initiative is supported through a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Q. What are the reasons for conducting such a study now?

A. People's opportunity to obtain a postsecondary education – as well as states' ability to provide access to one – is at risk. Demand for postsecondary education and training is expected to increase substantially over the next decade as the full impact of demographic and economic forces are felt. At the same time, most states are facing what has been described as the worst economy since World War II. Recent studies suggest that even if steady revenue growth resumes, nearly every state still will be unable to continue funding their current level of service based on current tax structures. ECS efforts are directed toward mobilizing the state policy community's ability to respond to the challenges.

Q. What has the Closing the College Participation Gap study produced to help state policymakers address these challenges?

A. The study has produced a diverse set of materials specifically for ECS' core constituency of state policymakers – governors, legislators, chief state school officers and state- or system-level postsecondary education leaders. *Closing the College Participation Gap: A National Summary* documents the nature and extent of postsecondary participation currently, as well as who is likely to be most at risk for losing access to such education in the future if current trends persist. *Closing the College Participation Gap: U.S. and State Profiles* consist of individual profiles that paint a portrait of postsecondary participation in each of the 50 states and in the nation as a whole. They also highlight some of the demographic and economic conditions likely to influence access and participation in the future. Two ECS-commissioned reports provide in-depth policy analyses: *Narrowing the Gaps in Educational Attainment Within States: A Policymaker's Guide to Assessing and Responding to Needs for Community College Services* by Aims C. McGuinness Jr. and Dennis P. Jones, and *Closing the Adult Learning Gap: Why States Need To Change Their Policies Toward Adult Learners* by Alice Anne Bailey and James R. Mingle.

Q. What are the key findings of *Closing the College Participation Gap: A National Summary?*

A. Three "warning signs" call attention to the risks the current level of postsecondary performance pose for raising educational attainment in the future: (1) The United States is falling behind other industrialized countries in college participation and other critical measures of postsecondary access and attainment, (2) current gaps in college participation and attainment based on age, race-ethnicity and income suggest a growing number of people may be at risk of losing access to a college education, and (3) demographic and economic forces are converging to limit states' ability to protect – much less expand – college access over the next decade.

Q. What data sources did ECS use as the basis for conducting its analysis?

A. U.S. Census data, particularly the state files contained in Summary File 3 of Census 2000, released in mid-2002, served as the primary source of information for this report. The decennial census is a comprehensive compendium of standardized information about the social and economic characteristics of the U.S. population at the turn of the decade. Additionally, the ECS analysis drew on other published data and information sources such as those produced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the U.S. Department of Education.

Q. What does ECS mean when it uses the word "college"?

A. For purposes of this study, ECS uses the term "college" to mean most forms of education and training beyond high school. The term "postsecondary education" means the same thing. The definition of college participation used here conforms to the way in which Census 2000 measures it – a person residing in the United States who attended a public or private degree-granting college or university.

Q. How is the college participation gap measured?

A. The "gap" is defined as the difference between two scenarios of future postsecondary participation, both of which take into account projected demographic changes. In one scenario, the current participation rate is maintained; in the other, the rate is improved. For purposes of this analysis, ECS chose the rate of the top-performing state in each of the age groups –18- to 24-year-olds, and 25 and older – to serve as "benchmarks" for the nation. Rhode Island is the top performer for individuals between the ages of 18 and 24. California is tops for those ages 25 and older. The gap in this analysis is calculated as the total number of additional students the state or the nation, as a whole, would need to enroll between now and 2015 if it were to match the participation rate of the benchmark states. It is important to note that this is not prescriptive: Each state will want to determine the appropriate level of access to which it will aspire. Other ways to set enrollment targets include, for example, a comparison to peer states or to the national average, or a designated level of improvement such as a 10% increase in enrollment numbers.

Q. Why do some states do better than other states on participation rates?

A. Understanding why some states do better than others with regard to participation is a complex issue and one that requires a look at a number of different factors that might be attributable to it. An ECS analysis found, for example, that higher participation rates of 18- to 24-year-olds in a particular state in the year 2000 were positively correlated with that state's: (1) percentage of 9th graders four years earlier who performed at or above proficient on national assessments of either math, science, reading or writing; (2) level of college-degree attainment among the adult population; (3) college-going rate of 1999-2000 high school graduates; (4) percentage of fall 2000 college freshmen in-migration; and (5) amount of state grant aid that goes to low-income students. In other words, *academic achievement, aspirations, access,* and *affordability* are among the factors that help explain a state's participation rate for traditional college-age students.

Q. Why focus on participation rate?

A. We focus specifically on *participation rate* as a key indicator of the extent to which states or the nation are preparing their populations with the high level of skills and knowledge that labor markets value and that citizens desire. Participation rate is also the measure used internationally to gauge both college accessibility and the value placed on attendance. Enrollment numbers taken at face value can be misleading. Demographic shifts in the age structure of the population alone are enough to ensure that the number of college students will climb, but it is the *participation rate* that really needs to be watched. The challenge that the nation faces is to accommodate not only a greater *number* of students but also to increase the *proportion* of the population that goes to college and successfully reaches its learning goals.

Q. Who is responsible for closing the college participation gap?

A. Although responsibility must be shared with the federal government, colleges and universities, business and industry, communities and students themselves, state policymakers will need to take the lead because of their primary role in setting policy and funding public postsecondary education in their states. Each state's unique historical and political context will help shape the specific nature of state actions designed to meet educational needs. Clearly, state leaders are overloaded with urgent priorities now, yet it remains vital to protect current postsecondary access and prepare to serve a larger and more diverse population of students in the coming years.

Q. What next steps might help guide state policymakers interested in closing the college participation gap in their states?

A. Good policy begins with good information, so policymakers should start with reliable data that will help tell the story about performance and conditions in their state. The U.S. and state profiles, designed with that objective in mind, provide an initial look based on Census 2000 data. It is important to recognize, however, that increased access and participation are means, not ends. The true meaning of access is that all prospective students will be prepared for college, be able to afford the costs of attendance and be successful in achieving their learning goals.

Postsecondary Participation

The table is based on enrollment rates, by age groups, which then were applied to population projections for the age groups.

- **Number of students in 2000:** Total number of persons, within each age group, who reported attending a public or private two- or four-year degree-granting college or university as of February 2000.
- **Projected number of students in 2015 at the current rate:** Assumes proportion of the population that enrolls in college in the future will continue to be the same as it is now for each age group.
- **Projected number of students in 2015 at the benchmark rate:** Assumes proportion of the population that enrolls in college in the future will match that of the best-performing state for each age group. Top-performing states are Rhode Island, for 18- to 24-year-olds, and California, for persons age 25 and older.
- **Participation gap in 2015:** The difference in 2015 between projected enrollments at the current rate and projected enrollments at the benchmark rate. The total number of additional students that would need to enroll between 2000 and 2015 if the participation rate of the best-performing states were matched.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, Summary File 3 (SF 3) and Projections of Resident Population by State, Middle Series

"Chance for College"

The chart pertains to the product of high school graduation rate multiplied by the college continuation rate of high school graduates.

- **Public high school graduation rate:** The number of regular high school graduates, 1999-2000, divided by the enrollment in 9th grade four years earlier.
- **College-going rate for high school graduates:** The number of fall 2000 freshmen enrolled in public or private, two- or four-year colleges, somewhere in the United States who had graduated from high school during the previous 12 months, by state of residence, divided by the number of public and private high school graduates of a state.
- **Chance for college low-income students:** For the academic year 2000-01. This is calculated as the ratio of two numbers. The numerator is the number of dependent Pell Grant recipients by state of residence. The denominator is the total number of 4th to 9th graders approved for free or reduced-price school lunches nine years earlier.

Sources: Postsecondary Education OPPORTUNITY, "Chance for College by Age 19 by State in 2000" Number 123, September 2002. Based on U.S. Department of Education data sources. For low-income students: Postsecondary Education OPPORTUNITY, "College Participation Rates by State for Students from Low-Income Families," Number 122, August 2002. Based on unpublished data, U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Agriculture data sources.

Highest Level of Educational Attainment, Age 25+, by Race/Ethnicity

Educational attainment is determined by an individual's highest degree or level of school completed. Race and ethnic categories defined by Census 2000 are as follows: American Indian and Alaskan Native, Asian, black or African American, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, Hispanic or other Latino and white. Figures are for the population age 25 and older.

- Less than high school credential includes those who have failed to attain a General Educational Development credential or a "regular" high school diploma.
- College degree includes holders of associate's, bachelor's, master's, professional or doctorate degrees.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, Summary File 3 (SF 3)

Population Characteristics

This table includes selected characteristics pertaining to the population.

- **Median family income:** Half the households had incomes above $49,242 and half had incomes below that amount.
- **% in poverty:** Uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is poor. As measured in 1999, poverty threshold for family of four was approximately $17,000.
- **% high school dropout:** Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and are not high school graduates.
- **% minority:** Percentage of sum total of the population who are of Hispanic origin or who selected any category other than "white alone" for racial group classification purposes.
- **Immigration since 1990:** Measures the lawful entry of foreign-born persons into the United States between 1990 and 2000. Figure includes both naturalized citizens and noncitizens.
- **Ratio of rural:urban residents:** Relative population size of rural residents to urban residents expressed as a quotient of rural divided by urban. Urban residents are defined as those who live in urbanized areas or in places of more than 2,500 persons.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, Summary File 3 (SF 3)

State Population Projections

Population totals by age group for 2000 and projections for 2015 based on projected demographic changes in the age structure of population.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, Summary File 3 (SF 3) and Projections of Resident Population by State, Middle Series

CURRENT PARTICIPATION RATES

State	18-24	25+
Alabama	33.3%	3.3%
Alaska	19.2%	5.6%
Arizona	29.2%	5.5%
Arkansas	28.6%	3.0%
California	35.4%	6.4%
Colorado	31.1%	5.4%
Connecticut	38.3%	4.4%
Delaware	37.8%	4.5%
Florida	31.7%	4.2%
Georgia	27.9%	3.9%
Hawaii	32.5%	5.2%
Idaho	30.7%	4.4%
Illinois	34.8%	4.8%
Indiana	34.3%	3.6%
Iowa	40.1%	3.6%
Kansas	36.5%	4.4%
Kentucky	29.5%	3.3%
Louisiana	32.3%	3.7%
Maine	33.0%	3.7%
Maryland	36.3%	5.4%
Massachusetts	44.1%	5.0%
Michigan	36.7%	4.6%
Minnesota	36.1%	4.0%
Mississippi	31.3%	3.1%
Missouri	32.9%	3.9%
Montana	33.8%	3.8%
Nebraska	38.5%	4.1%
Nevada	22.3%	4.5%
New Hampshire	38.6%	4.3%
New Jersey	35.1%	4.1%
New Mexico	29.1%	6.0%
New York	39.5%	4.8%
North Carolina	30.9%	4.0%
North Dakota	44.1%	3.7%
Ohio	34.2%	3.9%
Oklahoma	31.8%	4.0%
Oregon	30.8%	4.6%
Pennsylvania	39.0%	3.3%
Rhode Island	47.7%	4.8%
South Carolina	31.0%	3.5%
South Dakota	34.6%	3.4%
Tennessee	30.0%	3.3%
Texas	28.8%	4.4%
Utah	36.6%	5.8%
Vermont	43.1%	3.9%
Virginia	34.0%	4.7%
Washington	30.9%	4.8%
West Virginia	33.2%	2.8%
Wisconsin	36.5%	4.0%
Wyoming	31.6%	4.4%
United States	34.0%	4.5%

POSTSECONDARY PARTICIPATION, AGES 18-24

State	# of Students 2000	2015 at Current Rate	% Change 2000-15	2015 at Benchmark Rate	% Change 2000-15	Participation Gap in 2015
Alabama	145,569	157,936	8%	226,391	56%	68,455
Alaska	10,921	16,863	54%	41,920	284%	25,057
Arizona	149,538	165,046	10%	269,641	80%	104,595
Arkansas	75,014	71,381	-5%	119,085	59%	47,703
California	1,186,716	1,670,784	41%	2,252,489	90%	581,705
Colorado	132,917	142,873	7%	219,548	65%	76,674
Connecticut	103,425	125,281	21%	156,352	51%	31,071
Delaware	28,318	30,463	8%	38,507	36%	8,043
Florida	419,576	487,508	16%	733,942	75%	246,434
Georgia	233,081	262,039	12%	447,996	92%	185,957
Hawaii	37,309	50,731	36%	74,479	100%	23,748
Idaho	42,457	44,643	5%	69,432	64%	24,789
Illinois	420,002	448,400	7%	614,866	46%	166,466
Indiana	210,462	210,550	0%	293,435	39%	82,885
Iowa	119,413	107,117	-10%	127,673	7%	20,555
Kansas	100,694	103,889	3%	135,937	35%	32,048
Kentucky	118,476	113,324	-4%	183,354	55%	70,029
Louisiana	153,457	162,231	6%	239,756	56%	77,525
Maine	34,328	35,779	4%	51,774	51%	15,995
Maryland	162,502	205,158	26%	269,695	66%	64,537
Massachusetts	255,990	300,821	18%	325,299	27%	24,478
Michigan	341,047	343,321	1%	446,893	31%	103,572
Minnesota	169,048	171,790	2%	227,333	34%	55,543
Mississippi	97,904	92,102	-6%	140,451	43%	48,349
Missouri	175,609	182,586	4%	265,158	51%	82,572
Montana	28,907	28,497	-1%	40,300	39%	11,803
Nebraska	67,163	66,655	-1%	82,631	23%	15,976
Nevada	39,825	41,805	5%	89,376	124%	47,571
New Hampshire	39,677	47,255	19%	58,505	47%	11,250
New Jersey	236,808	287,114	21%	390,741	65%	103,627
New Mexico	51,333	64,032	25%	105,210	105%	41,178
New York	695,917	774,517	11%	934,969	34%	160,452
North Carolina	248,809	259,327	4%	400,550	61%	141,223
North Dakota	32,047	31,085	-3%	33,672	5%	2,587
Ohio	360,721	369,923	3%	517,117	43%	147,193
Oklahoma	113,663	114,039	0%	171,097	51%	57,059
Oregon	100,319	102,620	2%	159,265	59%	56,645
Pennsylvania	427,711	435,939	2%	533,184	25%	97,245
Rhode Island	50,717	51,633	2%	51,633	2%	0
South Carolina	126,236	129,311	2%	198,989	58%	69,677
South Dakota	26,912	26,068	-3%	35,957	34%	9,890
Tennessee	163,975	179,458	9%	285,855	74%	106,396
Texas	628,903	759,156	21%	1,260,299	100%	501,142
Utah	116,505	115,991	0%	151,354	30%	35,363
Vermont	24,552	25,467	4%	28,238	15%	2,771
Virginia	229,674	269,270	17%	378,421	65%	109,151
Washington	172,215	197,169	14%	304,348	77%	107,179
West Virginia	57,368	50,896	-11%	73,267	28%	22,371
Wisconsin	189,767	187,295	-1%	245,205	29%	57,910
Wyoming	15,808	18,452	17%	27,874	76%	9,422
United States	9,169,305	10,365,435	13%	14,568,044	59%	4,202,609

POSTSECONDARY PARTICIPATION, AGES 25 AND OLDER

State	# of Students 2000	2015 at Current Rate	% Change 2000-15	2015 at Benchmark Rate	% Change 2000-15	Participation Gap in 2015
Alabama	96,497	112,771	17%	215,011	123%	102,240
Alaska	21,193	25,762	22%	29,399	39%	3,637
Arizona	179,737	210,395	17%	242,872	35%	32,477
Arkansas	52,522	62,071	18%	130,367	148%	68,296
California	1,357,149	1,583,312	17%	1,583,312	17%	0
Colorado	149,044	175,608	18%	208,458	40%	32,850
Connecticut	100,124	104,396	4%	152,517	52%	48,120
Delaware	22,985	25,317	10%	36,121	57%	10,804
Florida	462,541	557,462	21%	846,643	83%	289,181
Georgia	201,805	235,930	17%	386,324	91%	150,394
Hawaii	42,017	51,758	23%	62,987	50%	11,230
Idaho	34,427	46,604	35%	67,927	97%	21,324
Illinois	386,352	403,914	5%	531,172	37%	127,257
Indiana	141,385	156,353	11%	274,339	94%	117,987
Iowa	67,346	72,944	8%	130,844	94%	57,900
Kansas	75,080	85,439	14%	123,356	64%	37,917
Kentucky	87,285	97,130	11%	187,645	115%	90,516
Louisiana	103,283	115,848	12%	198,366	92%	82,518
Maine	32,606	36,374	12%	61,834	90%	25,460
Maryland	190,277	214,209	13%	250,752	32%	36,542
Massachusetts	215,785	223,620	4%	282,176	31%	58,556
Michigan	293,160	301,119	3%	419,918	43%	118,799
Minnesota	126,357	142,747	13%	227,783	80%	85,036
Mississippi	54,476	62,110	14%	127,682	134%	65,571
Missouri	142,980	159,825	12%	258,900	81%	99,075
Montana	22,052	27,875	26%	47,248	114%	19,374
Nebraska	44,894	50,687	13%	78,218	74%	27,531
Nevada	58,324	68,380	17%	97,878	68%	29,497
New Hampshire	35,029	40,210	15%	60,270	72%	20,060
New Jersey	231,609	248,106	7%	386,188	67%	138,083
New Mexico	68,231	87,287	28%	92,504	36%	5,216
New York	597,896	590,147	-1%	788,842	32%	198,695
North Carolina	211,450	245,144	16%	390,269	85%	145,125
North Dakota	14,919	17,064	14%	29,778	100%	12,714
Ohio	289,839	306,020	6%	498,636	72%	192,616
Oklahoma	88,866	103,031	16%	162,762	83%	59,730
Oregon	103,190	128,715	25%	178,912	73%	50,196
Pennsylvania	273,261	284,084	4%	547,583	100%	263,499
Rhode Island	33,118	34,061	3%	45,518	37%	11,457
South Carolina	89,596	102,801	15%	189,796	112%	86,994
South Dakota	15,926	18,610	17%	35,319	122%	16,709
Tennessee	122,582	143,337	17%	279,027	128%	135,690
Texas	567,760	670,840	18%	962,998	70%	292,158
Utah	69,167	89,996	30%	99,315	44%	9,318
Vermont	15,655	17,744	13%	29,193	86%	11,450
Virginia	219,735	253,314	15%	342,791	56%	89,476
Washington	183,898	231,635	26%	307,194	67%	75,560
West Virginia	34,782	37,602	8%	84,976	144%	47,374
Wisconsin	137,990	153,460	11%	246,311	78%	92,850
Wyoming	13,780	18,434	34%	26,907	95%	8,473
United States	8,179,962	9,226,735	13%	13,068,500	60%	3,841,765

POSTSECONDARY PARTICIPATION, AGES 18 AND OLDER

State	# of Students 2000	2015 at Current Rate	% Change 2000-15	2015 at Benchmark Rate	% Change 2000-15	Participation Gap in 2015
Alabama	242,066	270,707	12%	441,402	82%	170,695
Alaska	32,114	42,624	33%	71,318	122%	28,694
Arizona	329,275	375,441	14%	512,513	56%	137,072
Arkansas	127,536	133,453	5%	249,452	96%	115,999
California	2,543,865	3,254,096	28%	3,835,801	51%	581,705
Colorado	281,961	318,481	13%	428,005	52%	109,524
Connecticut	203,549	229,678	13%	308,869	52%	79,191
Delaware	51,303	55,781	9%	74,628	45%	18,847
Florida	882,117	1,044,971	18%	1,580,585	79%	535,614
Georgia	434,886	497,969	15%	834,320	92%	336,351
Hawaii	79,326	102,489	29%	137,467	73%	34,978
Idaho	76,884	91,247	19%	137,359	79%	46,112
Illinois	806,354	852,314	6%	1,146,038	42%	293,724
Indiana	351,847	366,903	4%	567,774	61%	200,871
Iowa	186,759	180,062	-4%	258,517	38%	78,455
Kansas	175,774	189,328	8%	259,293	48%	69,965
Kentucky	205,761	210,454	2%	370,999	80%	160,545
Louisiana	256,740	278,080	8%	438,122	71%	160,043
Maine	66,934	72,153	8%	113,608	70%	41,455
Maryland	352,779	419,367	19%	520,447	48%	101,079
Massachusetts	471,775	524,441	11%	607,475	29%	83,034
Michigan	634,207	644,440	2%	866,811	37%	222,371
Minnesota	295,405	314,537	6%	455,116	54%	140,580
Mississippi	152,380	154,212	1%	268,133	76%	113,920
Missouri	318,589	342,411	7%	524,058	64%	181,647
Montana	50,959	56,372	11%	87,548	72%	31,177
Nebraska	112,057	117,342	5%	160,849	44%	43,507
Nevada	98,149	110,185	12%	187,254	91%	77,069
New Hampshire	74,706	87,466	17%	118,775	59%	31,310
New Jersey	468,417	535,219	14%	776,929	66%	241,710
New Mexico	119,564	151,319	27%	197,714	65%	46,395
New York	1,293,813	1,364,664	5%	1,723,811	33%	359,148
North Carolina	460,259	504,471	10%	790,819	72%	286,348
North Dakota	46,966	48,149	3%	63,450	35%	15,301
Ohio	650,560	675,943	4%	1,015,752	56%	339,809
Oklahoma	202,529	217,070	7%	333,859	65%	116,789
Oregon	203,509	231,336	14%	338,177	66%	106,841
Pennsylvania	700,972	720,023	3%	1,080,767	54%	360,744
Rhode Island	83,835	85,695	2%	97,152	16%	11,457
South Carolina	215,832	232,112	8%	388,784	80%	156,672
South Dakota	42,838	44,677	4%	71,276	66%	26,599
Tennessee	286,557	322,795	13%	564,882	97%	242,086
Texas	1,196,663	1,429,996	19%	2,223,296	86%	793,300
Utah	185,672	205,988	11%	250,669	35%	44,681
Vermont	40,207	43,211	7%	57,432	43%	14,221
Virginia	449,409	522,584	16%	721,212	60%	198,628
Washington	356,113	428,804	20%	611,543	72%	182,739
West Virginia	92,150	88,498	-4%	158,243	72%	69,745
Wisconsin	327,757	340,755	4%	491,516	50%	150,761
Wyoming	29,588	36,886	25%	54,781	85%	17,895
United States	17,349,267	19,592,170	13%	27,636,544	59%	8,044,374

CHANCE FOR COLLEGE

		How Chance for College is Measured:		
State	Chance for College	# of 9th Graders Who Graduate High School	# (or %) of HS Grads Who Go on to College	Chance for College, Low-Income Students
Alabama	34.2%	59	34 (or 58%)	16.4%
Alaska	27.6%	62	28 (or 44%)	5.8%
Arizona	29.6%	59	30 (or 50%)	15.6%
Arkansas	38.6%	74	39 (or 53%)	21.3%
California	32.1%	69	32 (or 48%)	22.2%
Colorado	37.1%	70	37 (or 53%)	17.1%
Connecticut	47.8%	77	48 (or 62%)	23.3%
Delaware	36.4%	61	36 (or 60%)	20.6%
Florida	31.8%	55	32 (or 57%)	21.9%
Georgia	31.6%	52	32 (or 60%)	15.8%
Hawaii	38.4%	64	38 (or 60%)	36.5%
Idaho	34.4%	77	34 (or 45%)	22.2%
Illinois	42.4%	71	42 (or 60%)	24.6%
Indiana	40.6%	68	41 (or 60%)	17.0%
Iowa	51.5%	83	52 (or 64%)	40.1%
Kansas	49.8%	74	50 (or 67%)	23.8%
Kentucky	37.9%	66	38 (or 59%)	18.1%
Louisiana	32.5%	56	33 (or 59%)	22.0%
Maine	41.1%	77	41 (or 54%)	29.7%
Maryland	39.0%	73	39 (or 55%)	29.9%
Massachusetts	51.6%	75	52 (or 69%)	28.5%
Michigan	39.5%	69	40 (or 59%)	23.3%
Minnesota	53.4%	84	53 (or 64%)	35.7%
Mississippi	33.9%	56	34 (or 63%)	20.2%
Missouri	38.5%	73	39 (or 53%)	22.7%
Montana	42.4%	78	42 (or 54%)	27.9%
Nebraska	49.7%	84	50 (or 59%)	38.8%
Nevada	27.7%	69	28 (or 40%)	14.3%
New Hampshire	43.5%	74	44 (or 59%)	41.9%
New Jersey	51.6%	86	52 (or 64%)	40.5%
New Mexico	32.6%	60	33 (or 59%)	14.2%
New York	34.4%	59	34 (or 64%)	37.3%
North Carolina	38.4%	59	38 (or 65%)	19.6%
North Dakota	58.4%	84	58 (or 69%)	29.8%
Ohio	39.0%	70	39 (or 56%)	20.8%
Oklahoma	36.1%	73	36 (or 50%)	20.0%
Oregon	34.3%	67	34 (or 51%)	19.1%
Pennsylvania	45.0%	75	45(or 61%)	35.5%
Rhode Island	45.6%	69	46 (or 66%)	30.5%
South Carolina	33.8%	51	34 (or 66%)	20.7%
South Dakota	47.2%	74	47 (or 64%)	22.5%
Tennessee	34.1%	55	34 (or 62%)	19.8%
Texas	32.5%	62	33 (or 52%)	15.9%
Utah	31.0%	84	31 (or 38%)	11.5%
Vermont	34.3%	79	34 (or 45%)	27.5%
Virginia	39.3%	74	39 (or 53%)	21.4%
Washington	31.6%	71	32 (or 45%)	23.8%
West Virginia	39.0%	75	39 (or 52%)	24.6%
Wisconsin	44.6%	78	45 (or 57%)	29.7%
Wyoming	39.2%	75	39 (or 52%)	22.5%
United States	37.5%	67	38 (or 57%)	23.1%

ADULTS, AGE 25 AND OLDER, WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL CREDENTIAL

State	Black	Asian	NH/PI*	Hispanic	White	AI/AN**	All
Alabama	33.1%	18.9%	29.4%	43.1%	21.9%	27.6%	24.7%
Alaska	11.3%	27.0%	24.2%	21.7%	7.3%	28.2%	11.7%
Arizona	18.3%	16.6%	16.2%	47.5%	10.6%	38.1%	19.0%
Arkansas	34.2%	27.1%	30.8%	58.8%	22.2%	27.5%	24.7%
California	19.5%	19.5%	24.0%	53.3%	10.2%	32.5%	23.2%
Colorado	15.6%	18.2%	15.8%	41.9%	7.8%	23.8%	13.1%
Connecticut	26.1%	15.0%	19.7%	41.5%	12.7%	32.2%	16.0%
Delaware	25.8%	11.9%	46.7%	42.9%	14.5%	34.8%	17.4%
Florida	33.0%	19.3%	28.5%	36.7%	14.4%	26.5%	20.1%
Georgia	27.5%	20.5%	28.7%	51.5%	17.3%	26.1%	21.4%
Hawaii	7.1%	20.1%	19.0%	18.5%	6.8%	9.0%	15.4%
Idaho	17.5%	18.0%	19.9%	55.6%	12.6%	24.4%	15.3%
Illinois	27.0%	13.1%	29.5%	51.5%	13.0%	30.5%	18.6%
Indiana	25.1%	13.8%	23.0%	42.1%	16.5%	26.7%	17.9%
Iowa	22.7%	25.7%	21.4%	47.7%	12.9%	23.1%	13.9%
Kansas	20.3%	25.2%	11.3%	48.3%	11.4%	18.7%	14.0%
Kentucky	26.8%	13.8%	21.9%	40.9%	25.7%	27.5%	25.9%
Louisiana	36.9%	32.6%	20.3%	31.0%	19.9%	39.5%	25.2%
Maine	15.3%	25.4%	19.7%	20.8%	14.5%	24.0%	14.6%
Maryland	21.1%	14.5%	19.0%	38.1%	13.2%	24.5%	16.2%
Massachusetts	23.7%	23.8%	23.6%	42.7%	12.6%	27.5%	15.2%
Michigan	25.9%	14.4%	26.5%	37.7%	14.4%	23.6%	16.6%
Minnesota	21.0%	28.9%	21.7%	41.9%	10.5%	25.5%	12.1%
Mississippi	39.6%	27.5%	19.7%	40.9%	21.0%	36.0%	27.1%
Missouri	26.1%	17.8%	16.2%	34.3%	17.5%	25.7%	18.7%
Montana	8.8%	14.8%	20.0%	22.0%	12.1%	24.5%	12.8%
Nebraska	21.4%	22.3%	38.1%	53.4%	11.2%	24.1%	13.4%
Nevada	21.1%	18.0%	19.7%	52.7%	12.4%	24.8%	19.3%
New Hampshire	15.6%	15.1%	14.9%	26.4%	12.3%	23.5%	12.6%
New Jersey	25.5%	11.5%	31.3%	40.5%	13.5%	29.6%	17.9%
New Mexico	20.6%	16.9%	21.9%	35.6%	9.4%	32.9%	21.1%
New York	29.4%	26.7%	29.1%	45.0%	14.0%	33.6%	20.9%
North Carolina	29.3%	20.7%	17.4%	55.5%	18.3%	37.3%	21.9%
North Dakota	7.4%	15.6%	23.1%	27.0%	15.7%	25.2%	16.1%
Ohio	26.1%	13.4%	21.5%	32.9%	15.7%	26.8%	17.0%
Oklahoma	21.5%	22.8%	24.8%	49.1%	17.4%	23.5%	19.4%
Oregon	20.2%	20.5%	17.9%	51.2%	12.2%	22.5%	14.9%
Pennsylvania	28.2%	21.6%	23.3%	43.1%	16.4%	26.8%	18.1%
Rhode Island	29.0%	30.8%	42.3%	49.6%	19.2%	31.7%	22.0%
South Carolina	35.1%	20.5%	27.5%	43.6%	18.9%	35.8%	23.7%
South Dakota	15.9%	27.7%	20.5%	35.1%	14.3%	29.1%	15.4%
Tennessee	29.2%	17.9%	26.9%	44.6%	22.9%	25.1%	24.1%
Texas	24.2%	19.3%	25.3%	50.7%	12.8%	28.5%	24.3%
Utah	16.8%	20.1%	23.3%	43.5%	9.0%	31.3%	12.3%
Vermont	15.8%	21.6%	4.6%	14.4%	13.4%	23.1%	13.6%
Virginia	28.4%	15.8%	11.9%	37.1%	15.4%	21.5%	18.5%
Washington	16.0%	19.5%	17.0%	47.0%	10.0%	22.6%	12.9%
West Virginia	23.4%	9.7%	13.9%	25.8%	24.9%	26.5%	24.8%
Wisconsin	31.5%	26.8%	21.3%	45.4%	13.1%	22.7%	14.9%
Wyoming	13.3%	17.6%	27.0%	33.7%	10.7%	22.8%	12.1%
United States	27.7%	19.6%	21.8%	47.6%	14.6%	29.1%	19.6%

NH/PI = Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

**AI/AN = American Indian/Alaska Native*

ADULTS, AGE 25 AND OLDER, WITH A COLLEGE DEGREE (ASSOCIATE OR HIGHER)

State	Black	Asian	NH/PI*	Hispanic	White	AI/AN**	All
Alabama	17.0%	53.8%	23.2%	19.0%	26.5%	21.5%	24.4%
Alaska	24.7%	26.7%	15.7%	22.2%	37.3%	9.4%	31.9%
Arizona	27.4%	51.0%	27.6%	12.4%	35.5%	13.0%	30.3%
Arkansas	13.8%	37.9%	13.4%	9.4%	22.0%	17.5%	20.7%
California	25.9%	49.6%	20.1%	11.9%	41.9%	18.4%	33.7%
Colorado	29.3%	48.9%	30.4%	15.0%	44.3%	21.8%	39.7%
Connecticut	19.5%	62.6%	28.0%	15.5%	41.1%	22.2%	38.0%
Delaware	19.4%	66.1%	8.7%	18.3%	34.0%	17.5%	31.6%
Florida	18.5%	48.0%	23.4%	23.8%	32.0%	22.4%	29.4%
Georgia	20.6%	49.2%	22.2%	17.2%	33.0%	24.4%	29.5%
Hawaii	31.8%	34.9%	18.2%	22.2%	45.3%	30.1%	34.2%
Idaho	33.6%	43.7%	23.2%	10.0%	30.1%	16.6%	28.9%
Illinois	20.8%	63.5%	26.9%	12.8%	35.2%	19.7%	32.1%
Indiana	17.6%	62.6%	27.0%	15.0%	25.8%	17.8%	25.2%
Iowa	20.5%	47.5%	26.8%	14.8%	28.9%	17.4%	28.6%
Kansas	21.0%	44.6%	34.2%	13.4%	33.1%	23.2%	31.6%
Kentucky	16.1%	57.9%	18.8%	17.5%	22.2%	20.6%	22.0%
Louisiana	13.7%	39.3%	26.5%	24.1%	25.4%	12.9%	22.2%
Maine	28.7%	37.2%	31.1%	30.0%	30.3%	19.3%	30.2%
Maryland	25.4%	59.5%	31.6%	25.9%	40.4%	27.4%	36.8%
Massachusetts	27.0%	54.2%	30.1%	18.6%	42.1%	26.3%	40.4%
Michigan	18.7%	65.9%	30.4%	18.0%	30.0%	17.5%	28.7%
Minnesota	25.4%	41.6%	29.7%	18.4%	35.9%	15.1%	35.1%
Mississippi	14.7%	39.9%	23.4%	17.4%	26.4%	14.5%	22.6%
Missouri	18.5%	55.8%	27.2%	20.8%	27.4%	18.9%	26.7%
Montana	43.2%	47.0%	27.2%	21.6%	30.9%	19.5%	30.2%
Nebraska	20.0%	47.5%	27.4%	11.4%	32.2%	16.1%	31.1%
Nevada	18.1%	35.4%	18.6%	9.2%	27.4%	14.6%	24.3%
New Hampshire	35.1%	60.5%	36.4%	29.6%	37.3%	23.2%	37.4%
New Jersey	21.4%	67.0%	23.7%	16.4%	37.9%	21.1%	35.0%
New Mexico	26.1%	49.5%	28.8%	15.4%	41.0%	14.3%	29.4%
New York	22.8%	46.3%	27.1%	16.3%	39.6%	21.6%	34.5%
North Carolina	18.6%	49.5%	19.7%	14.0%	32.5%	15.6%	29.2%
North Dakota	36.7%	55.0%	26.9%	24.7%	31.7%	21.9%	31.4%
Ohio	17.8%	63.2%	26.5%	20.1%	27.8%	19.4%	27.0%
Oklahoma	19.6%	43.5%	25.9%	13.1%	27.1%	19.2%	25.7%
Oregon	24.4%	46.4%	24.4%	13.2%	32.8%	19.7%	31.7%
Pennsylvania	17.5%	53.4%	28.6%	16.1%	29.2%	18.8%	28.3%
Rhode Island	23.6%	42.5%	11.3%	12.6%	34.5%	23.2%	32.6%
South Carolina	15.0%	47.8%	19.8%	19.2%	31.6%	18.0%	27.1%
South Dakota	27.9%	43.3%	38.6%	17.5%	29.5%	15.5%	28.6%
Tennessee	17.5%	52.6%	23.8%	17.8%	25.3%	21.2%	24.3%
Texas	21.0%	53.7%	22.2%	12.4%	35.9%	21.9%	28.5%
Utah	27.0%	44.0%	18.2%	14.3%	35.9%	16.3%	34.0%
Vermont	43.8%	51.9%	33.0%	44.4%	37.1%	26.0%	37.1%
Virginia	20.0%	54.5%	37.4%	25.6%	38.2%	27.1%	35.1%
Washington	28.4%	44.8%	19.6%	16.1%	37.0%	20.2%	35.8%
West Virginia	15.9%	67.4%	9.1%	23.5%	19.0%	22.4%	19.2%
Wisconsin	16.4%	48.1%	25.2%	15.3%	30.8%	17.3%	29.9%
Wyoming	27.8%	43.7%	14.5%	13.1%	31.1%	16.1%	29.9%
United States	20.0%	50.6%	21.0%	14.7%	33.6%	18.0%	30.7%

NH/PI = Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
***AI/AN = American Indian/Alaska Native*

STATE POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

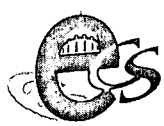
State	Median Family Income	% in Poverty	% High School Dropout	% Minority	Immigration Since 1990	Ratio of Rural:Urban
Alabama	$41,657	16.1	12.0	29.7	46,520	1:1.2
Alaska	$59,036	9.4	8.9	32.4	14,753	1:1.9
Arizona	$46,723	13.9	14.8	36.2	317,381	1:7.5
Arkansas	$38,663	15.8	9.6	21.4	40,741	1:1.1
California	$53,025	14.2	10.2	53.4	3,270,746	1:17.0
Colorado	$55,883	9.3	12.2	25.6	201,072	1:5.5
Connecticut	$65,521	7.9	7.4	22.6	144,271	1:7.1
Delaware	$55,257	9.2	10.4	27.5	21,187	1:4.0
Florida	$45,625	12.5	12.0	34.6	1,030,449	1:8.4
Georgia	$49,280	13.0	13.8	37.3	344,763	1:2.5
Hawaii	$56,961	10.7	6.1	77.2	72,394	1:10.8
Idaho	$43,490	11.8	8.2	12.0	30,570	1:2.0
Illinois	$55,545	10.7	10.0	32.2	687,564	1:7.2
Indiana	$50,261	9.5	9.8	14.1	97,460	1:2.4
Iowa	$48,005	9.1	5.8	7.3	52,335	1:1.6
Kansas	$49,624	9.9	8.1	16.9	74,260	1:2.5
Kentucky	$40,939	15.8	11.6	10.7	47,225	1:1.3
Louisiana	$39,774	19.6	11.7	37.5	42,849	1:2.7
Maine	$45,179	10.9	6.2	3.5	10,383	1:0.7
Maryland	$61,876	8.5	8.4	37.9	228,429	1:6.2
Massachusetts	$61,664	9.3	6.6	18.1	312,288	1:10.6
Michigan	$53,457	10.5	8.7	21.5	235,269	1:2.9
Minnesota	$56,874	7.9	5.9	11.8	141,968	1:2.4
Mississippi	$37,406	19.9	12.4	39.2	19,781	1:1.0
Missouri	$46,044	11.7	10.2	16.2	79,223	1:2.3
Montana	$40,487	14.6	8.0	10.5	4,751	1:1.2
Nebraska	$48,032	9.7	7.0	12.6	43,162	1:2.3
Nevada	$50,849	10.5	16.0	34.9	139,294	1:10.9
New Hampshire	$57,575	6.5	7.3	4.9	20,191	1:1.4
New Jersey	$65,370	8.5	7.2	34.0	614,416	1:16.7
New Mexico	$39,425	18.4	12.1	55.3	58,482	1:3.0
New York	$51,691	14.6	8.8	38.0	1,561,609	1:7.0
North Carolina	$46,335	12.3	12.8	29.8	268,357	1:1.5
North Dakota	$43,654	11.9	4.8	8.2	6,339	1:1.3
Ohio	$50,037	10.6	8.3	16.0	143,035	1:3.4
Oklahoma	$40,709	14.7	10.0	25.9	69,879	1:1.9
Oregon	$48,680	11.6	10.4	16.5	144,801	1:3.7
Pennsylvania	$49,184	11.0	7.1	15.9	209,123	1:3.4
Rhode Island	$52,781	11.9	8.2	18.1	41,478	1:10.0
South Carolina	$44,227	14.1	11.4	33.8	60,807	1:1.5
South Dakota	$43,237	13.2	8.0	11.9	7,427	1:1.1
Tennessee	$43,517	13.5	9.8	20.8	91,804	1:1.7
Texas	$45,861	15.4	12.6	47.6	1,335,524	1:4.7
Utah	$51,022	9.4	8.8	14.7	90,725	1:7.5
Vermont	$48,625	9.4	5.9	3.9	8,217	1:0.6
Virginia	$54,169	9.6	7.8	29.9	269,121	1:2.7
Washington	$53,760	10.6	8.8	21.1	286,439	1:4.6
West Virginia	$36,484	17.9	9.0	5.5	6,916	1:0.9
Wisconsin	$52,911	8.7	6.4	12.6	90,728	1:2.2
Wyoming	$45,685	11.4	7.6	11.2	4,237	1:1.9
United States	$49,242	12.4	9.9	30.8	13,140,743	1:3.8

STATE POPULATION PROJECTIONS

	Total Population			Ages 0-17			Ages 18-24		
State	2000	2015	% Chg	2000	2015	% Chg	2000	2015	% Chg
Alabama	4,447,100	4,955,749	11.4%	1,123,422	1,107,180	-1.4%	439,612	474,222	7.9%
Alaska	626,932	791,246	26.2%	190,717	242,061	26.9%	57,292	87,809	53.3%
Arizona	5,130,632	5,808,358	13.2%	1,366,947	1,431,948	4.8%	514,101	564,818	9.9%
Arkansas	2,673,400	2,922,185	9.3%	680,369	626,780	-7.9%	261,738	249,447	-4.7%
California	33,871,648	41,372,945	22.1%	9,249,829	11,806,383	27.6%	3,366,030	4,718,293	40.2%
Colorado	4,301,261	4,833,065	12.4%	1,100,795	1,101,673	0.1%	430,111	459,887	6.9%
Connecticut	3,405,565	3,505,698	2.9%	841,688	784,613	-6.8%	271,585	327,511	20.6%
Delaware	783,600	831,840	6.2%	194,587	184,299	-5.3%	75,328	80,660	7.1%
Florida	15,982,378	18,496,825	15.7%	3,646,340	3,672,345	0.7%	1,330,602	1,537,390	15.5%
Georgia	8,186,453	9,199,751	12.4%	2,169,234	2,198,424	1.3%	837,732	938,418	12.0%
Hawaii	1,211,537	1,553,089	28.2%	295,767	408,561	38.1%	114,893	156,012	35.8%
Idaho	1,293,953	1,621,500	25.3%	369,030	410,017	11.1%	138,829	145,439	4.8%
Illinois	12,419,293	12,807,836	3.1%	3,245,451	3,183,744	-1.9%	1,210,898	1,287,962	6.4%
Indiana	6,080,485	6,404,070	5.3%	1,574,396	1,483,970	-5.7%	614,721	614,658	0.0%
Iowa	2,926,324	2,994,436	2.3%	733,638	673,548	-8.2%	298,008	267,436	-10.3%
Kansas	2,688,418	2,938,738	9.3%	712,993	718,058	0.7%	275,592	284,748	3.3%
Kentucky	4,041,769	4,230,672	4.7%	994,818	901,721	-9.4%	401,858	384,071	-4.4%
Louisiana	4,468,976	4,840,044	8.3%	1,219,799	1,224,698	0.4%	473,801	502,218	6.0%
Maine	1,274,923	1,362,238	6.8%	301,238	283,370	-5.9%	103,903	108,451	4.4%
Maryland	5,296,486	5,861,915	10.7%	1,356,172	1,361,726	0.4%	450,922	564,931	25.3%
Massachusetts	6,349,097	6,574,092	3.5%	1,500,064	1,464,255	-2.4%	579,328	681,404	17.6%
Michigan	9,938,444	9,916,812	-0.2%	2,595,767	2,390,568	-7.9%	932,137	936,107	0.4%
Minnesota	4,919,479	5,282,541	7.4%	1,286,894	1,231,551	-4.3%	470,434	476,195	1.2%
Mississippi	2,844,658	3,035,139	6.7%	775,187	737,120	-4.9%	310,974	294,203	-5.4%
Missouri	5,595,211	6,005,482	7.3%	1,427,692	1,386,911	-2.9%	535,978	555,426	3.6%
Montana	902,195	1,069,363	18.5%	230,062	243,436	5.8%	85,757	84,416	-1.6%
Nebraska	1,711,263	1,849,975	8.1%	450,242	449,343	-0.2%	174,425	173,088	-0.8%
Nevada	1,998,257	2,179,035	9.0%	511,799	455,741	-11.0%	179,708	187,216	4.2%
New Hampshire	1,235,786	1,371,944	11.0%	309,562	303,522	-2.0%	103,369	122,551	18.6%
New Jersey	8,414,350	8,924,494	6.1%	2,087,558	2,045,228	-2.0%	676,628	818,485	21.0%
New Mexico	1,819,046	2,299,996	26.4%	508,574	627,871	23.5%	177,576	220,384	24.1%
New York	18,976,457	18,916,292	-0.3%	4,690,107	4,577,834	-2.4%	1,765,453	1,958,481	10.9%
North Carolina	8,049,313	8,840,441	9.8%	1,964,047	1,876,586	-4.5%	806,821	839,033	4.0%
North Dakota	642,200	703,854	9.6%	160,849	165,991	3.2%	73,118	70,533	-3.5%
Ohio	11,353,140	11,587,811	2.1%	2,888,339	2,679,091	-7.2%	1,056,544	1,083,205	2.5%
Oklahoma	3,450,654	3,789,331	9.8%	892,360	876,574	-1.8%	357,085	358,398	0.4%
Oregon	3,421,399	3,992,126	16.7%	846,526	850,701	0.5%	327,884	333,613	1.7%
Pennsylvania	12,281,054	12,448,684	1.4%	2,922,221	2,738,133	-6.3%	1,094,449	1,116,862	2.0%
Rhode Island	1,048,319	1,070,148	2.1%	247,822	247,632	-0.1%	106,607	108,156	1.5%
South Carolina	4,012,012	4,368,671	8.9%	1,009,641	973,225	-3.6%	407,851	416,822	2.2%
South Dakota	754,844	839,531	11.2%	202,649	209,922	3.6%	77,634	75,320	-3.0%
Tennessee	5,689,283	6,364,850	11.9%	1,398,521	1,387,059	-0.8%	548,856	598,780	9.1%
Texas	20,851,820	24,280,083	16.4%	5,886,759	6,526,988	10.9%	2,198,881	2,639,950	20.1%
Utah	2,233,169	2,670,002	19.6%	718,698	794,326	10.5%	317,431	317,042	-0.1%
Vermont	608,827	662,074	8.7%	147,523	144,770	-1.9%	56,586	59,151	4.5%
Virginia	7,078,515	7,921,369	11.9%	1,738,262	1,748,983	0.6%	679,398	792,680	16.7%
Washington	5,894,121	7,058,161	19.7%	1,513,843	1,599,579	5.7%	559,361	637,519	14.0%
West Virginia	1,808,344	1,851,364	2.4%	402,393	364,293	-9.5%	172,431	153,473	-11.0%
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,693,099	6.1%	1,368,756	1,313,905	-4.0%	520,629	513,632	-1.3%
Wyoming	493,782	640,560	29.7%	128,873	159,895	24.1%	49,928	58,388	16.9%
United States	280,849,847	309,539,524	10.2%	72,178,820	74,376,152	3.0%	27,070,817	30,434,894	12.4%

STATE POPULATION PROJECTIONS (continued)

	Ages 25-64			Ages 65 and older		
State	2000	2015	% Chg	2000	2015	% Chg
Alabama	2,304,268	2,589,812	12.4%	579,798	784,535	35.3%
Alaska	343,224	394,915	15.1%	35,699	66,461	86.2%
Arizona	2,581,745	2,844,647	10.2%	667,839	966,945	44.8%
Arkansas	1,357,274	1,513,201	11.5%	374,019	532,757	42.4%
California	17,660,131	20,383,179	15.4%	3,595,658	4,465,090	24.2%
Colorado	2,354,282	2,526,468	7.3%	416,073	745,037	79.1%
Connecticut	1,822,109	1,867,865	2.5%	470,183	525,709	11.8%
Delaware	411,959	443,497	7.7%	101,726	123,384	21.3%
Florida	8,197,839	9,462,045	15.4%	2,807,597	3,825,045	36.2%
Georgia	4,394,212	4,888,451	11.2%	785,275	1,174,458	49.6%
Hawaii	640,276	776,634	21.3%	160,601	211,882	31.9%
Idaho	640,178	805,031	25.8%	145,916	261,013	78.9%
Illinois	6,462,919	6,601,416	2.1%	1,500,025	1,734,714	15.6%
Indiana	3,138,537	3,342,877	6.5%	752,831	962,565	27.9%
Iowa	1,458,465	1,521,435	4.3%	436,213	532,017	22.0%
Kansas	1,343,604	1,488,870	10.8%	356,229	447,062	25.5%
Kentucky	2,140,300	2,259,039	5.5%	504,793	685,841	35.9%
Louisiana	2,258,447	2,407,953	6.6%	516,929	705,175	36.4%
Maine	686,380	751,627	9.5%	183,402	218,790	19.3%
Maryland	2,890,085	3,173,034	9.8%	599,307	762,224	27.2%
Massachusetts	3,409,543	3,463,930	1.6%	860,162	964,503	12.1%
Michigan	5,191,522	5,168,216	-0.4%	1,219,018	1,421,921	16.6%
Minnesota	2,567,885	2,779,769	8.3%	594,266	795,026	33.8%
Mississippi	1,414,974	1,547,911	9.4%	343,523	455,905	32.7%
Missouri	2,876,162	3,120,856	8.5%	755,379	942,289	24.7%
Montana	465,427	543,580	16.8%	120,949	197,931	63.6%
Nebraska	854,401	924,252	8.2%	232,195	303,292	30.6%
Nevada	1,087,821	1,186,209	9.0%	218,929	349,869	59.8%
New Hampshire	674,885	752,462	11.5%	147,970	193,409	30.7%
New Jersey	4,537,028	4,781,809	5.4%	1,113,136	1,278,972	14.9%
New Mexico	920,671	1,141,823	24.0%	212,225	309,918	46.0%
New York	10,072,545	9,753,194	-3.2%	2,448,352	2,626,783	7.3%
North Carolina	4,309,397	4,680,429	8.6%	969,048	1,444,393	49.1%
North Dakota	313,755	341,913	9.0%	94,478	125,417	32.7%
Ohio	5,900,500	6,018,087	2.0%	1,507,757	1,807,428	19.9%
Oklahoma	1,745,259	1,900,947	8.9%	455,950	653,412	43.3%
Oregon	1,808,812	2,066,102	14.2%	438,177	741,710	69.3%
Pennsylvania	6,345,219	6,502,640	2.5%	1,919,165	2,091,049	9.0%
Rhode Island	541,488	552,641	2.1%	152,402	161,719	6.1%
South Carolina	2,109,187	2,282,799	8.2%	485,333	695,825	43.4%
South Dakota	366,430	417,148	13.8%	108,131	137,141	26.8%
Tennessee	3,038,595	3,385,657	11.4%	703,311	993,354	41.2%
Texas	10,693,648	12,024,492	12.4%	2,072,532	3,088,653	49.0%
Utah	1,006,818	1,221,277	21.3%	190,222	337,357	77.3%
Vermont	327,208	357,204	9.2%	77,510	100,949	30.2%
Virginia	3,868,522	4,270,624	10.4%	792,333	1,109,082	40.0%
Washington	3,158,769	3,738,842	18.4%	662,148	1,082,221	63.4%
West Virginia	956,625	972,718	1.7%	276,895	360,880	30.3%
Wisconsin	2,771,737	2,972,538	7.2%	702,553	893,024	27.1%
Wyoming	257,288	321,307	24.9%	57,693	100,970	75.0%
United States	146,678,355	159,233,372	8.6%	34,921,855	45,495,106	30.3%



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