

Policy Brief

Stopped Short: 2.1 Million Adults in Florida Went to College But Didn't Finish

FLORIDA

The Florida College Access Network (Florida C.A.N.!) has embraced and endorsed the emerging national and state consensus that boosting the percentage of Americans with postsecondary degrees and credentials is necessary to succeed in a knowledge-based society and economy. The debate moving forward rests largely on what strategies and measures must be implemented to accelerate high-quality degree production to realize the goal of more Floridians accessing and succeeding in postsecondary education.

A group gaining considerable attention and is increasingly recognized as essential to raising postsecondary degree attainment is working-aged adults (aged 25-64) who went to college and earned college credit, but left without finishing a degree. According to 2010 U.S. Census data, more than 2.1-million Florida residents, not currently enrolled in a postsecondary institution, reported having “some college credit” representing 21.8-percent of the Florida working-age population. In fact, further investigation into institutional data shows that, between 2008 and 2011, 112,374 students left a Florida 2-year or 4-year public institution after completing over half of their degree program. With the current college degree attainment rate standing at 36.5-percent in Florida, re-engaging these former students and providing incentives and flexible re-entry options for them to return to college and earn their degree is critical to helping Florida meet projected labor market demands.

To that end, this policy brief aims to inform our statewide partners on what is currently underway to re-engage this group of former students and provide key data on where they are, how much progress they have made toward earning their degree, and what action should be considered moving forward to enhance local efforts. The high number of adults in Florida who have left the system without a degree is evidence that a broader approach needs to be pursued to develop pathways back into postsecondary institutions mostly built for traditional college-age students. Furthermore, simply getting these students to re-matriculate will not be enough – community leaders, businesses, municipalities, and other local stakeholders will need to align existing resources in order to provide the support these students will need to successfully re-enroll and complete their chosen degree program. All sectors in Florida benefit from increased degree attainment and, therefore, a collective approach to supporting success for this population is not only reasonable, but necessary.

Florida College Access Network's mission is to create and strengthen a statewide network that catalyzes and supports communities to improve college & career preparation, access, and completion for all students.



A National Dilemma

The high percentage of students leaving college before earning their degrees is not a problem specific to Florida. As shown in Figure 1, the United States as a whole experiences a similar trend within its working-age population. While Florida trails the U.S. slightly in its share of adults with some college but no degree, the total number of adults who left college early in Florida is third highest among all other states, trailing only California and Texas. President Barack Obama has challenged states to help the nation raise its college graduation numbers in order to meet projected workforce demands and reclaim its standing as the highest educated workforce in the world. For the United States and Florida, 63- and 59-percent of jobs that will exist in the year 2018 are projected to require a postsecondary education¹.

Figure 1: Educational attainment for working-aged adults in Florida and U.S.: 2010

	Florida		United States	
	# of residents	% working aged adults	# of residents	% working aged adults
Working aged adults (25-64):	9,803,980	66.05%	163,855,408	69.67%
Less than 9th grade	436,359	4.45%	7,972,497	4.87%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	817,557	8.34%	12,539,457	7.65%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	2,835,384	28.92%	44,350,497	27.07%
Some college, no degree	2,136,681	21.79%	36,209,776	22.10%
Associate's degree	960,424	9.80%	13,832,109	8.44%
Bachelor's degree	1,739,410	17.74%	31,423,077	19.18%
Graduate or professional degree	878,165	8.96%	17,527,995	10.70%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	3,577,999	36.50%	62,783,181	38.32%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey

Why Are So Many Students Leaving College Early?

Despite being motivated to enroll and finish college, why is the number of students who leave early so high? Why do they leave early? A study by the Public Agenda found students who left college early tend to do so because of overall stress, overwhelming financial burdens, a lack of guidance and knowledge about college-related decisions, and/or because they were unsure about the benefits of completing college².

Another study showed that a loss of financial aid coupled with large increases in tuition or living costs lead to early student departure³. The increasing cost of college is both prevalent and significant in Florida. Tuition and fees in our state's public 2-year institutions went up 69-percent from \$1,780 to \$3,006 from academic years 2004-05 to 2011-12. During those same years, tuition and fees increased 84-percent at 4-year public institutions in the state from \$3,054 to \$5,626⁴. These increases in tuition have translated into more borrowing among college students. In 2009-10, Florida students graduating from all

¹ Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. "Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements through 2018." June 2010, <http://www9.georgetown.edu/grad/gppi/hpi/cew/pdfs/State-LevelAnalysis-web.pdf>.

² Public Agenda. "With Their Whole Lives Ahead of Them: Myths and Realities About Why So Many Students Fail to Finish College." December 2009, <http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/theirwholivesaheadofthem.pdf>.

³ Pleskac, T., Keeney, J., Merritt, S., Schmitt, N. and Oswald, F. "A Detection Model of College Withdrawal." Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes. May 2011, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2010.12.001>.

⁴ The College Board. "Trends in College Pricing." October 2011. Tuition and fees were enrollment-weighted and measured in current dollars, http://trends.collegeboard.org/college_pricing/.

public institutions held an average of \$19,114 in college loans which is up from \$14,815 in 2004-05⁵. Such increases to the cost of college can cause students to enroll in classes part-time and work a full-time job, which makes finishing a degree program increasingly more difficult. According to Complete College America, only 7.8-percent of part-time students attending 2-year schools earn their degree when given four years, while only 24.3-percent of part-time students attending 4-year schools finish when given eight years⁶. Increases in the cost of college also lead to more students using loans. According to Education Sector, the students who borrow to pay for college are more likely to drop out. Students who leave early experience higher unemployment rates and earn less money than those who earned their degree. Borrowers who left college before graduation were more than four times more likely to default on their student loan bills⁷.

Should They Return?

One piece of good news is that among students who leave early, almost 90-percent give returning to college at least “some thought⁸.” The problem lies with how to facilitate a return, which typically involves overcoming many barriers. Some obstacles shown to impede adults looking to return to college are the complexity of the enrollment process, class scheduling (need for evening courses) and the unavailability of alternative delivery modes, affording the cost of college, transcript issues, anxiety and fear, unavailability of prior learning assessments, juggling full-time work with school, the need for affordable child care and tending to family responsibilities^{9, 10}. With the long list of challenges these students face, it is easy to see how difficult staying in college and finishing is, and also how institutions struggle with attending to the many needs that students often have.

The consequences for not finishing college are not only felt by the student and their families, but by the state and its taxpayers as a whole. The American Institutes for Research calculated that for a single year and a single cohort of full-time, 4-year degree-seeking students in Florida, those who failed to graduate in six years lost a combined \$132-million in income. When looking at the cumulative loss of income over a college dropout’s lifetime, the cumulative loss of income for this cohort in Florida is over \$5.6-billion¹¹. Research also shows that individuals with a postsecondary education are less likely to rely on state-sponsored programs such as workers’ and unemployment compensation¹². State lawmakers need to consider the collective impact that such substantial losses of income among college dropouts has on the economy.

With all of these factors in mind, the time is upon us to survey the potential statewide solutions for helping adults with some credit return to college. The reason for the sense of urgency is the number of working-aged adults seeking to enroll in postsecondary education is projected to increase substantially.

⁵ college-insight.org.

⁶ Complete College America. “Time is the Enemy: The Surprising Truth About Why Today’s College Students Aren’t Graduating, and What Needs to Change.” October 2011, http://www.completecollege.org/docs/Time_Is_the_Enemy.pdf.

⁷ Education Sector. “Degreeless and in Debt: What Happens to Borrowers Who Drop Out.” February 2012, http://www.educationsector.org/sites/default/files/publications/DegreelessDebt_CYCT_RELEASE.pdf.

⁸ Public Agenda report, December 2009.

⁹ National Governors Association. “Complete to Compete: Improving Postsecondary Attainment Among Adults.” February 2011, <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1102POSTSECONDARYATTAINMENT.PDF>.

¹⁰ Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. “Bringing Adults Back to College: Designing and Implementing a Statewide Concierge Model.” November 2010, <http://www.wiche.edu/info/publications/ntnmConciergeBrief.pdf>.

¹¹ American Institutes for Research. “The High Cost of Low Graduation Rates: How Much Does Dropping Out of College Really Cost?” August 2011, http://www.air.org/files/AIR_High_Cost_of_Low_Graduation_Aug2011.pdf.

¹² Trostel, P. & Todd, G. “Fiscal and Economic Effects of College Attainment,” Opportunity Maine. March 2007, http://www.umaine.edu/soe/files/2009/06/soe_566trostel.pdf.

From 2000 to 2008, enrollments by recent high school graduates grew faster than enrollments by adults aged 25 and older (25.3-percent and 23.6-percent), which is consistent with the perception many of us hold about college-bound students. Between 2009 and 2019, however, this trend is expected to reverse, with adult enrollment increasing by twice as much as recent high school graduates (22.6-percent and 9.7-percent)¹³. If Florida does not focus on establishing an effective framework for helping adults re-enter college and finish their degrees, the problem will only intensify as more students enroll and subsequently dropout or stop out.

Where Are These Students Located In Florida?

To help local communities develop and implement strategies to serve Florida’s working-age population with some college credit but no degree, Florida C.A.N.! has gathered 2010 U.S. Census data on degree attainment levels for all 67 counties in Florida. This data can serve as a tool for regional and local leaders to identify where opportunities for improvement exist so that resources and programmatic efforts can be aligned to help this population return to college and earn their degree—making a positive impact on the total number of adults with college degrees in the labor market. The data also outlines just how much room for improvement there is across the state with regards to the number of adults with some college credit but no degree. Counties range from having just hundreds to hundreds of thousands of such residents. If Florida is to make progress in improving its degree attainment rate, each county must know where they stand to guide their decision-making and strategic efforts.

Figure 2: Working-aged adults (25-64) with some college and no degree and 2-degree or higher in Florida by county and United States: 2010¹⁴

County	% of Working-aged Adults with Some College, No Degree	% of Working-aged Adults with 2-year Degree or Higher	County	% of Working-aged Adults with Some College, No Degree	% of Working-aged Adults with 2-year Degree or Higher	County	% of Working-aged Adults with Some College, No Degree	% of Working-aged Adults with 2-year Degree or Higher
Alachua	17.60%	54.14%	Hardee	17.22%	12.09%	Okeechobee	19.06%	18.43%
Baker	14.48%	15.75%	Hendry	13.74%	12.47%	Orange	19.51%	42.79%
Bay	26.12%	31.95%	Hernando	26.24%	26.59%	Osceola	22.41%	30.49%
Bradford	21.21%	16.50%	Highlands	21.60%	23.55%	Palm Beach	20.46%	41.96%
Brevard	24.29%	40.01%	Hillsborough	19.90%	41.05%	Pasco	24.12%	33.13%
Broward	20.77%	41.79%	Holmes	17.12%	16.08%	Pinellas	22.47%	39.08%
Calhoun	17.22%	16.40%	Indian River	23.86%	34.36%	Polk	19.80%	27.71%
Charlotte	24.91%	31.98%	Jackson	23.60%	21.21%	Putnam	17.90%	19.10%
Citrus	23.49%	25.50%	Jefferson	23.09%	21.06%	Santa Rosa	25.55%	37.18%
Clay	26.65%	35.50%	Lafayette	19.35%	20.84%	Sarasota	22.93%	38.18%
Collier	18.99%	34.93%	Lake	25.12%	30.62%	Seminole	22.92%	46.18%
Columbia	22.96%	24.43%	Lee	23.03%	33.06%	St. Johns	22.35%	49.86%
DeSoto	16.74%	15.80%	Leon	20.24%	51.52%	St. Lucie	23.19%	27.24%
Dixie	22.26%	10.83%	Levy	22.43%	21.01%	Sumter	21.56%	23.07%
Duval	24.28%	35.44%	Liberty	11.02%	19.31%	Suwannee	21.56%	17.87%
Escambia	25.06%	34.67%	Madison	17.97%	16.74%	Taylor	23.21%	18.75%
Flagler	27.65%	33.42%	Manatee	20.85%	36.24%	Union	16.99%	14.69%
Franklin	19.44%	21.85%	Marion	21.87%	27.56%	Volusia	25.18%	32.97%
Gadsden	20.10%	17.56%	Martin	22.29%	41.36%	Wakulla	23.07%	25.76%
Gilchrist	22.53%	17.29%	Miami-Dade	16.20%	37.72%	Walton	23.98%	31.68%
Glades	22.01%	17.05%	Monroe	23.81%	38.54%	Washington	23.39%	18.73%
Gulf	18.72%	20.48%	Nassau	22.94%	30.48%	Florida	21.79%	36.50%
Hamilton	16.58%	14.36%	Okaloosa	26.29%	38.69%	United States	22.10%	38.32%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey

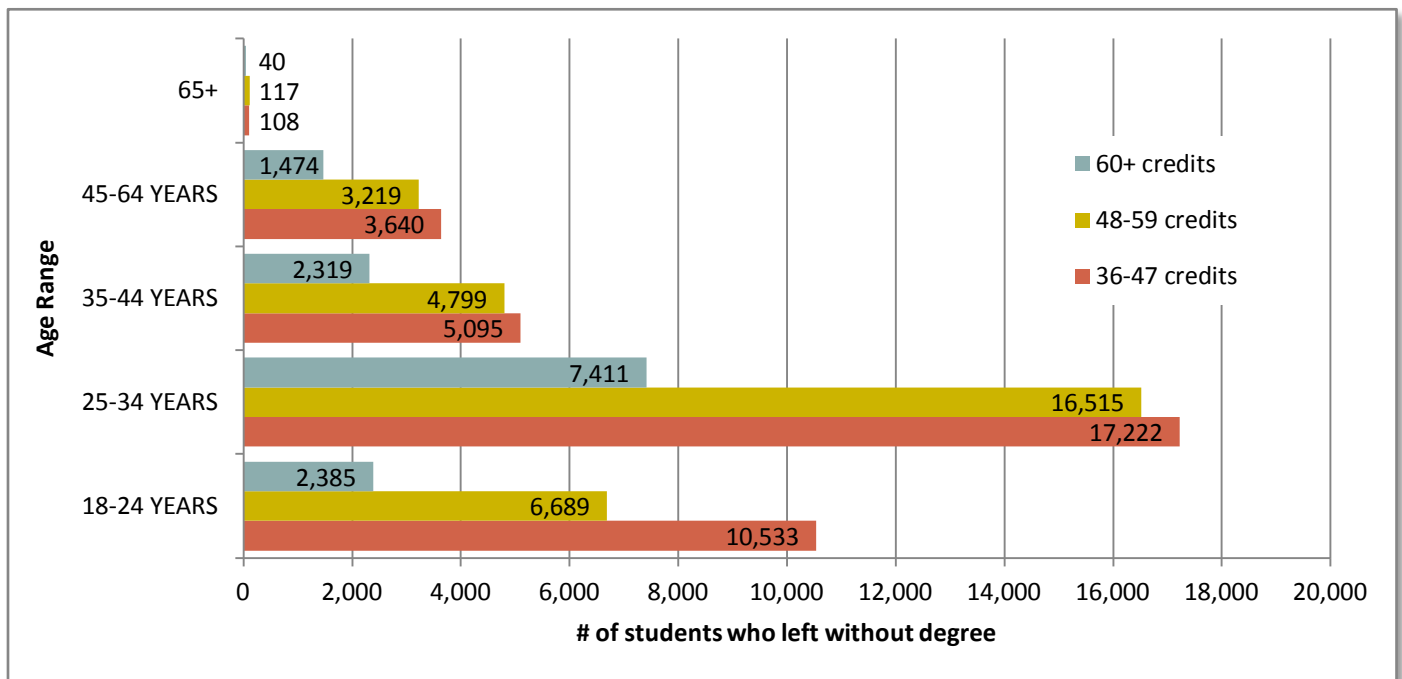
¹³ Center for Law and Social Policy and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. “Not Just Kid Stuff Anymore: The Economic Imperative for More Adults to Complete College.” June 2011, <http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/NotKidStuffAnymoreAdultStudentProfile-1.pdf>.

¹⁴ For more data on counties and degree attainment, see Appendix.

When Students Leave College, How Close To Completing A Degree Are They?

U.S. Census data is widely used to gauge adult degree attainment because of its convenience and scope, but taking a look at institutional data affords a different perspective on how to approach the issue of re-engaging adult near-completers often referred to as “low-hanging fruit.” Florida C.A.N.! requested data from the Division of Florida Colleges, the State University System of Florida and the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida to learn more about the number of adults who are leaving college near the time of completion. The students targeted in this study were ones who were degree-seeking, relatively close to finishing their program of study, had not completed a degree from another institution, in good academic standing, were Florida residents, and had attended but not returned for a subsequent term during the 2008-09, 2009-10 or 2010-11 academic years¹⁵. Included in this policy brief are analyses of Florida’s state and community colleges and state universities. The Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida were not able to provide data on students who left their institutions pursuant to their agreement with its member institutions.

Figure 3: Number of students who left a Florida College System institution without a degree, by age range and number of credits completed: 2008-2011



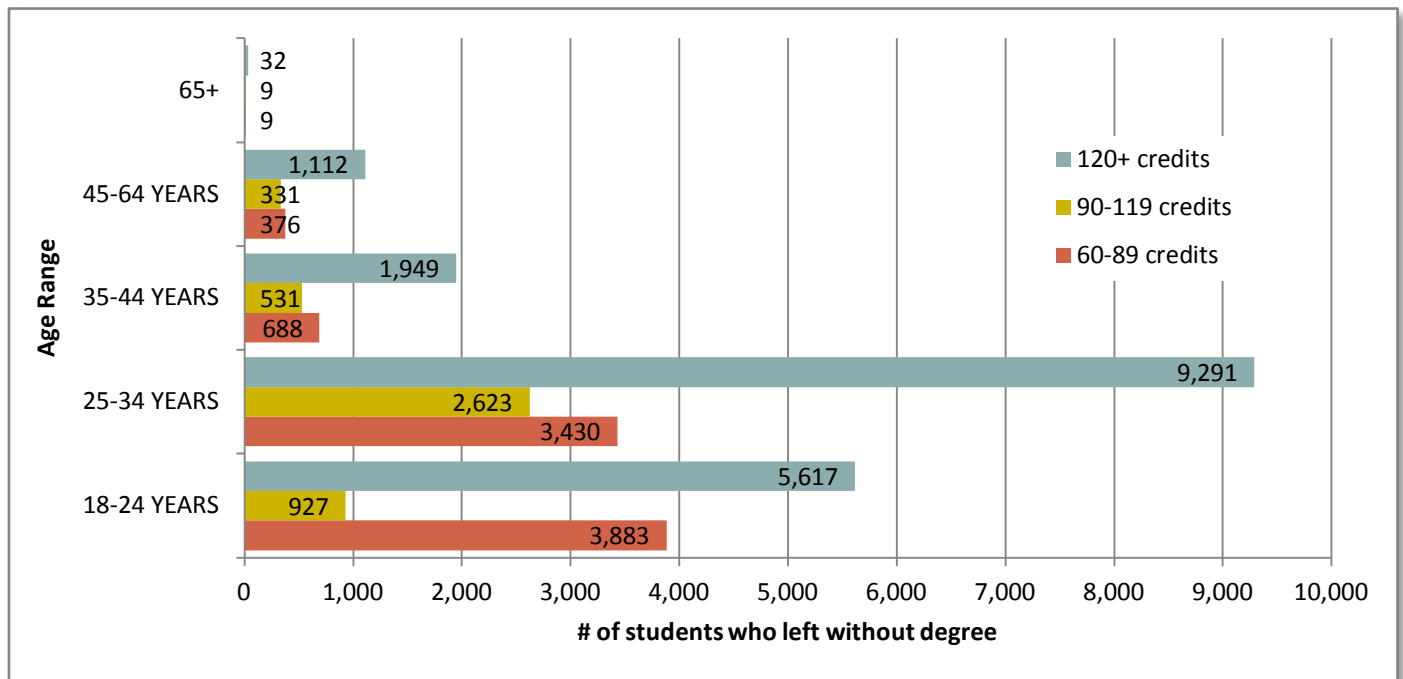
Source: Florida College System Student Database

Figure 3 shows the number of students who left a Florida College System institution without their degree over the past three academic years by age and number of credits completed at the time of their last term of attendance. The figure above shows 81,566 students left their college with over 36 credits completed, which is over half of the progress needed to earn an associate’s degree (60 credits). There were 36,598 students who left college having earned between 36-47 credits (roughly 70-percent of the credits needed to graduate), 31,339 students who left with between 48-59 credits completed (roughly 90-percent of the credits needed to graduate) and 13,629 students who left with 60 credits or more completed (over 100-percent of the credits needed to graduate) over the last three academic years. To put these numbers into

¹⁵ The SUS and FSC systems do not currently have a contract with the National Student Clearinghouse to verify attendance or degree completion at institutions across state lines.

context, Florida public colleges enrolled 367,693 associate’s degree-seeking students in 2008-09, 437,013 in 2009-10 and 464,957 in 2010-11¹⁶.

Figure 4: Number of students who left a State University System of Florida institution without a degree, by age range and number of credits completed: 2008-2011



Source: State University System, Information Resource Management

Figure 4 shows the number of students who left a State University System of Florida institution without their degree over the past three academic years by age and number of credits completed at the time of their last term of attendance. The figure above shows 30,808 such students left their university with over 60 credits completed, which is half of the progress needed to earn a bachelor’s degree (120 credits). There were 8,386 students who left a university with between 60-89 credits completed (roughly 60-percent of the credits needed to graduate), 4,421 students who left with between 90-119 credits completed (roughly 80-percent of the credits needed to graduate) and 18,001 students who left with 120 credits or more completed (over 100-percent of the credits needed to graduate) over the last three academic years. To put these numbers into context, Florida public universities enrolled 233,772 bachelor’s degree-seeking students in 2008-09, 240,102 in 2009-10 and 247,408 in 2010-11¹⁷.

About 73-percent (82,025) of all students aged 18 and older (112,382) who left a Florida public college or university without their degree are within the working-age population. Research over the last ten years has set out to learn more about this group of students and the challenges they face, to illuminate the potential strategies states and communities might utilize to re-engage this group. Stakeholders of higher education in Florida are helping to inform this research by leading and implementing several exploratory strategies designed to support this important group of former college students.

¹⁶ Florida Department of Education. Division of Florida Colleges Fact Books, <http://www.fldoehub.org/CCTCMIS/c/Pages/default.aspx>.

¹⁷ State University System. Interactive University Data, <http://www.flbog.org/resources/iud/>.

What Action Is Taking Place In Florida To Re-Engage Adults Who Have Left College Early?

Florida cannot rely solely on students entering higher education through the traditional pipeline (students entering college straight from high school) for significantly improving its educational attainment rate. Even if Florida was able to maximize the efficiency of the traditional pipeline (match the best performing states in high school graduation, college-going and completion rates), our state would fall short 893,504 degrees to reach just a 55-percent degree attainment level by the year 2025¹⁸. This represents the second highest shortfall in the nation. Without educating adults and re-engaging former students, Florida will not reach the degree attainment rate required to compete in the new economy. As an alternative to the traditional college pipeline, some states and institutions have turned to a “concierge” model to assist non-traditional students and adults to get back into college.

Florida is in the midst of implementing such programs to re-engage adults with some college but no degree. This concept of the concierge model has been developed by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) with support from the Lumina Foundation and refers to a single contact point designed to help returning adults navigate the registration process and overcome barriers to degree completion¹⁹. Most colleges and universities are designed to receive and serve recent high school graduates entering college for the first time. The concierge model creates a specific pathway designed for students re-entering an institution with accompanying support focused on eliminating the kinds of barriers these students tend to face. Finish Up, Florida! and the Adult Completion Pilot Project are two initiatives that feature components of an adult concierge model. These initiatives, as well as other activities and policies taking place in our state to re-engage adults who left college early, are described below.

Finish Up, Florida!

The Florida College System, made up of 28 community and state colleges, has identified college completion as one of its primary goals within its system’s strategic plan. Recently, they have launched a program called Finish Up, Florida! (FUF) designed to reconnect with students who have stopped or dropped out of college before degree completion²⁰. This initiative reaches out to over 87,000 students who have left within the past two years after completing 36 semester hours or more. Together with FACTS.org, Florida’s college advising website, a new website has been launched which guides former students through five main steps needed to re-enroll in a Florida college. Recently, select students received information about the website and how to access it through a direct mail piece sent out from their previous institution. In addition to the web tool, the Finish Up, Florida! team, made up of two former college officials who are based at the Department of Education in Tallahassee, has personally visited each college campus and provided campus administrators with their targeted students’ contact information and worked to establish a local FUF team on each campus – a person(s) designated to assist adults interested in re-enrolling. Regional workshops and trainings have been held by the statewide FUF team to support institutional efforts and to share best practices assisting adult returners.

¹⁸ Center for Adult and Experiential Learning. “Adult Learning in Focus: National and State-by State Data.” August 2008, http://www.cael.org/pdfs/State_Indicators_Monograph.

¹⁹ WICHE Report, November 2010.

²⁰ Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges. “A Community for Completion: Promising Practices to Increase Completion in the Florida College System.” March 2012, <http://www.fldoe.org/cc/OSAS/newsletters/pdf/CompletionMarch12.pdf>.

The Degree Completion Pilot Project

A group of Florida universities and colleges have developed a broad and expansive effort toward improving degree attainment among adults who left college before completing. The initiative, called the Degree Completion Pilot Project, intends to recruit, recover and retain adults who have left their institutions without a degree and assist them in completing an associate's or baccalaureate degree that is aligned with high-wage, high-skill workforce needs. The University of West Florida, in collaboration with the University of South Florida, Florida State College at Jacksonville and St. Petersburg College are taking the lead on implementation of this pilot, which if successful, will provide a framework for a fully functioning statewide degree completion program.

These pilot institutions will offer online degree programs to students who have completed over half of their program of study that can be completed in a timely manner, are competency-based and are aligned with in-demand careers. The pilot institutions will also look to partner with other state colleges and universities which can leverage their compatible programs to offer students a variety of online degree completion options. This vision connects with a broader aspiration to establish the Florida Virtual Campus, which conceptually is an online portal with the capacity of delivering online support and resources to students as well as serve as a clearinghouse for public postsecondary distance learning courses and degree programs. Such cooperative efforts have taken place among groups of 2-year degree-granting institutions, but Florida is looking to move toward the front with other states in the country such as Oklahoma and Louisiana with regards to improving baccalaureate degree production among adults looking to finish their degree²¹. Also part of the pilot project is an evaluation process that collects, analyzes and provides information on the effectiveness of the project, as well as job placement and employment data on adult learners who completed their degrees as a result of the project. A marketing campaign is also planned to recruit adult learners, in particular veterans and active duty members of the United States Armed Forces, for enrollment in the programs offered through the pilot project.

On April 18, 2012, Governor Rick Scott vetoed House Bill 5201, which was set to appropriate \$2.5-million to establish the Degree Completion Pilot Project with state funding²². With state support, the pilot aimed to begin implementation for the upcoming 2012-13 academic year. Without the support of state government, the participating institutions will face significant challenges in creating the infrastructure needed to make a collective effort in delivering these programs that can help adults return to college and finish their degrees.

Project Win-Win

Is it possible to leave college without a degree but be eligible to be awarded one? The answer is yes, and Florida has joined a national effort called Project Win-Win to find these students and retroactively award them their associate's degree. The initiative, funded by the Lumina Foundation and coordinated by the Division of Florida Colleges in partnership with the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), began in the fall of 2011 and is taking place at three pilot colleges in the state – Broward College, Indian River State College and St. Johns River State College, which collectively enroll over 100,000 students in their respective regions. The first step in the project is identifying which students at these three institutions may be eligible or very close to finishing an associate in arts, associate in science or associate in applied science degree. As of February 2011, the pilot institutions involved in Project Win-Win identified over

²¹ See Oklahoma's Reach Higher Degree Completion program and Center for Adult Learning in Louisiana (CALL) initiative.

²² StateImpact Florida. "Education Items Among Gov. Rick Scott's \$142.7 Million in Budget Vetoes." April 2012, <http://stateimpact.npr.org/florida/2012/04/17/education-items-among-gov-rick-scotts-142-7-million-in-budget-vetoes/>.

48,346 students who left their institutions before receiving a degree. After identifying these students who left college early, the following criteria were applied to reveal those who were close to or eligible to graduate:

1. were actively enrolled at Broward College, Indian River State College, or St. Johns River State College in fall 2005 or later;
2. earned a minimum of 48 college credit hours from any public postsecondary institution in Florida (including natives/transfers and all courses counting toward college credit);
3. were considered Florida residents for tuition purposes, per section 1009.21, Florida Statutes; departed one of the three colleges with no Associate in Arts (AA)/Associate in Science (AS)/Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree;
4. have not attended any Florida college for at least three consecutive semesters;
5. did not subsequently enroll or earn a degree in The Florida College System, State University System of Florida, Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida, or out of state institutions;
6. have completed all required developmental education coursework;
7. have earned at least a 2.0 grade point average for the most recent year when data are available; and
8. are not in loan default.

The remaining students were then matched with other state and national databases to eliminate students who had subsequently enrolled or completed their degree at another state or national degree-granting institution. After doing this, 8,304 were found to be potentially close to, or eligible to finishing their associate's degree.

The pilot colleges have begun analyzing these students' records to award students who are eligible for an associate's degree and contact students very near completion to provide a template to follow to earn their degree. The first group of eligible graduates will be awarded degrees this summer, and the initiative will continue identifying eligible graduates and near-graduates until June 2013 with the hope to expand this effort to all 28 colleges in the Florida College System. The lessons learned from the project will help improve procedures and processes within registrar and enrollment management offices which in turn will yield higher completion rates for Florida institutions and more degrees for Florida college students, hence the name – Win-Win²³.

Independent Colleges & Universities of Florida

The Independent Colleges & Universities of Florida (ICUF) represents 29 private postsecondary institutions and plays an important role in educating adults in the state. Florida's private colleges and universities have historically admitted high numbers of adult students and part-time students relative to the state's public institutions. Because of the high numbers of non-traditional students, ICUF institutions have over time aligned themselves to be accessible to adults and those returning to college, mostly through online programs. They have a convenient online listing of available distance learning programs on their website. Other ICUF institutions have joined the Florida Distance Learning Consortium, a group of public and private school districts, colleges, and universities working together to increase student access to undergraduate online courses and degree programs. Rollins College, Saint Leo

²³ Information about Project Win-Win was provided by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges.

University, Lynn University and others are members of the consortium²⁴. ICUF has also been involved with the work of the Higher Education Coordinating Council and the on-going discussion surrounding the establishment and utility of the Florida Virtual Campus.

Senate Bill 532: College Credit for Military Training and Education Courses

National unemployment for young veterans is currently at 30-percent and on the rise. To assist veterans returning to the state with securing gainful employment, the Florida Senate passed Senate Bill 532, which enables members of the U.S. Armed Forces to earn college-level credit for training and education acquired in service²⁵. Florida has seen a 40-percent increase in the number of veterans on college campuses since 2009. The new statute puts into place a uniform process for determining and aligning military coursework and experience with college course descriptions and credits. This bill was not directly written to impact adults with some credit to return to college, but the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill has encouraged many first-time and returning adults to take advantage of its benefits and earn a degree.

Policy Implications

Targeting adults with some college credit but no degree is a sensible solution to improving degree attainment numbers for Florida. The discussion about how to re-engage these adults who are near completion of a college degree has garnered a fair amount of attention nationwide and has just begun in Florida²⁶. In order to build on the work that is underway and to ensure Florida closes the gap of the projected shortfall of high quality degrees and credentials needed to meet future workforce demand, the Florida College Access Network proposes the following:

A Statewide, Cross-Sector Solution for Providing Access and Wrap-Around Services To Adult Near-Completers

Postsecondary institutions teach and support the students they admit, but less than desirable completion data across sectors shows their limitations – colleges and universities cannot meet all of the needs of their students alone. Students have increasing demands outside of their education that make completion a challenge, which we believe calls for a dynamic network of entities whose collective effort will give students the support needed to complete a degree. Non-profits, community-based organizations, businesses and municipalities are increasingly becoming more and more proactive in the college access and completion debate taking place across the state. With budgets decreasing and the cost of college for students and their families increasing, state lawmakers, institutions and local entities can do more together to help serve these students than is possible in isolation. The planned projects by the State University System of Florida (SUS) and Division of Florida Colleges (FCS) include training for “champions” or specialists for serving adults re-entering college. These professionals should reach out to their communities to identify available resources for students, such as transportation, child care and help with technology. Connecting returning students to such resources available locally can help adult learners achieve the balance they will need between education and other life demands. Single Stop USA, a national initiative with a site at Miami Dade College, is an example of such an approach. Adults who

²⁴ The Florida Distance Learning Consortium is a collaborative organization of Florida postsecondary institutions working in the area of distance learning and educational technology and serves as an advisory body to the Florida Board of Governors and the Florida Division of Colleges. For more information, visit distancelearn.org.

²⁵ Office of Senator Thad Altman. “Altman’s Bill Helping Vets Receive College Credit Passes Legislature.” February 2012, <http://www.flsenate.gov/Media/PressRelease/Show/716>.

²⁶ The following websites from Lumina Foundation and Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education provide more information on national, multi-state, metro and institutional initiatives focused on increasing degree attainment among adults: http://www.luminafoundation.org/newsroom/news_releases/2010-09-29-adult_degree_completion_commitment_partners.html <http://www.wiche.edu/ntnm/resources/statesInstitutions>.

leave college tend not to return to their home institution, which is why a broad, statewide solution with cross-sector support is needed²⁷.

Online Postsecondary Degree Programs

One solution many believe can provide the access and flexibility adults need to complete postsecondary degrees is the availability of high-quality, affordable online degree programs. To date there are over 642 fully online degree programs in Florida offered by public colleges and universities with over 28,000 courses listed in the distance learning catalog. In 2012, state colleges and universities plan to continue expanding online programs with another 69 courses set to become available by the end of the year²⁸. The newly established Florida Virtual Campus (H.B. 5201) will serve as a statewide resource and clearinghouse for public postsecondary education distance learning courses and degree programs, making it easier for all students to learn more about the availability of online courses and support services. Florida policymakers have been amenable to the spread of online education in the past (see Florida Virtual School) and it seems as though that trend will continue. Florida C.A.N.! supports this trend and calls on state policymakers to ensure any new online model for higher education offer students an affordable, competency-based, in-demand curriculum utilizing the faculty expertise of our SUS, FCS, and ICUF institutions.

Access to National Student Clearinghouse Data

Another solution necessary for tracking and locating adults who have left college prior to completion is increased access to cross-institutional data. According to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), over one-third of college students transfer to a different institution after initial enrollment²⁹. The only way researchers currently have access to tracking students across different states and postsecondary sectors is through the NSC, which captures 96-percent of all students attending public and private higher education institutions in the nation. As part of our data request for this brief, Florida C.A.N.! requested NSC enrollment verification but was denied due to the lack of a state agency contract with the NSC. Without this verification of attendance or degree completion, any conclusions about how many students failed to earn degrees and where students might be located (particularly outside of Florida) are limited. Florida C.A.N.! recommends all institutions of higher education in Florida establish a relationship with NSC and data access to the NSC database to learn more about the attendance and completion patterns of Florida students. The state as a whole suffers when students are “lost” after leaving.

Involvement from the Business Community

Adult postsecondary education and training programs benefit businesses by way of improved employee performance and productivity, increased employee retention rates and reduced administrative time and costs³⁰. When states invest in policies and programs that help adults with some college credit quickly attain skills, businesses can meet their workforce needs quickly. Businesses and colleges can partner to provide training to students looking to attain skills that align with shifting workforce demands. An initiative called the HIRE (Higher Income Requires Education) Education Forum in Indiana and Kentucky has created partnerships with business leaders to empower 200,000 employees who have

²⁷ Wlodkowski, R. J., Mauldin, J. E., & Campbell, S. “Early Exit: Understanding Adult Attrition in Accelerated and Traditional Postsecondary Programs.” July 2002, <http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/synopsis/Earlvexit02.pdf>.

²⁸ Budget Subcommittee on Higher Education Meeting, January 2012, http://www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2010-2012/BHI/MeetingRecords/BHI_Committee_Meeting_Packet_-_1-24-12.pdf.

²⁹ National Student Clearinghouse. “Transfer and Mobility: A National View of Pre-degree Student Movement in Postsecondary Institutions.” February 2012, http://www.studentclearinghouse.info/signature/2/NSC_Signature_Report_2.pdf.

³⁰ NGA Report, February 2011.

earned some credit to complete a degree. The National Career Pathways Network (NCPN) provides employers with opportunities to connect with educators to provide career pathways for adults. A report published by NCPN outlines work being done in Fort Pierce, FL, where partnerships with local business have been seen as being vital to the success in enabling adults to return to school and acquire knowledge and skills³¹.

The Tampa Bay Partnership, a regional organization made up of over 175 business and community leaders, has launched an initiative called Graduate Tampa Bay, which targets adults with some credit and encourages them to return to college to earn a degree by working with postsecondary institutions in the area. Dr. Ken Atwater, president of Hillsborough Community College and leader of the initiative cites, “getting just 30,000 of the 700,000 bay area residents with some credit but no degree to return and to graduate will generate \$3-billion in new revenue for the area³².” The Beacon Council in Miami and *myregion.org* of Orlando represent similar regional partnerships where the potential exists for business to lead and reach out to adults to assist them in returning to college to complete a degree. To reap the benefits of a talented and skilled workforce, more employers should take part in the necessary investments in human capital to get there.

The Bernard Osher Foundation Re-entry Scholarship Program

Scholarships are a way to provide support and incentives to students from targeted backgrounds to enroll in college. A lack of financial aid has been shown to provide significant barriers for adults looking to return to college and finish their education, which makes the Bernard Osher Foundation’s Re-entry Scholarship Program a more than appropriate solution. The foundation awards scholarships to adults who stopped school due to an interruption in their education of five or more years and wish to return to a university to complete their degree.

Currently, the University of South Florida is the only Florida university among 86 institutions in 47 states that offers this scholarship to adult students³³. Since 2007, \$50,000 in annual grants have funded 37 scholarships for USF adult students. In July 2011, USF was awarded a \$1-million endowment from the Bernard Osher Foundation, which intends to support up to 26 students each year³⁴. USF was also awarded an additional \$1-million endowment by the Osher Foundation to support the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute on campus, which provides adults 50 years of age and older with opportunities for intellectual development, cultural stimulation, civic engagement and social interaction³⁵.

Institutions interested in this program may submit proposals to have access to dollars that can be directed to adults looking to return and finish. The research in this brief outlines the high number of students who leave Florida universities who would benefit from such financial support.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

Many working adults have earned college equivalent knowledge and skills outside of academia through employment experience, military experience and other endeavors. Many colleges are beginning to

³¹ National Career Pathways Network. “Thriving in Challenging Times: Connecting Education to Economic Development through Career Pathways.” April 2012, http://www.ncpn.info/downloads/Thriving_in_Challenging_Times.pdf.

³² Tampa Bay Times. “Graduate Tampa Bay Rolls Out Program to Increase Number of Local College Graduates.” March 2012, <http://www.tampabay.com/news/business/graduate-tampa-bay-rolls-out-program-to-increase-number-of-local-college/1222042>.

³³ The Bernard Osher Foundation. “Osher Reentry Scholarship Program.” <http://www.osherfoundation.org/index.php?reentry>.

³⁴ USF University College News. “University of South Florida Receives \$1 Million Endowment to Assist Adult Learners.” July 2011, <http://uc.usf.edu/news/7-21-11.asp>.

³⁵ University of South Florida, University College. Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, <http://www.conted.usf.edu/seniors/>.

evaluate these experiences through a process called prior learning assessments, or PLA's, to award college credit for prior learning that can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. The use of PLA's is a strategy many colleges are using to help adults make progress toward a degree. A report by the Council for Adult & Experiential Learning (CAEL) on 48 institutions using PLA's found adult students (aged 25 or above) who earned PLA credits were more likely to have earned a degree than those who did not³⁶. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) shows the use of "credit for life experiences" is on the rise, going from 1,483 institutions doing so from 2004-2005 to 2,007 in 2010-2011. The passage of Senate Bill 532, designed to award military veterans credit for training and education courses while on duty, shows there is support for such policies in Florida. Florida C.A.N.! encourages more state-specific research in this area and calls on institutions to explore ways to incorporate PLAs as part of their strategy to re-engage adult returners.

Conclusion

As the highly-educated baby boomer generation shifts into retirement, states like Florida must begin discussing solutions that have the potential to offset the projected shortage of college-educated workers in the future. This policy brief introduces the topic and emphasizes the importance of re-engaging the 2.1-million working-aged adults who have some college credit but no degree in our state. The 112,374 students who have left public Florida institutions in the last three years with over 50-percent of their programs completed shows we have a lot of room for improvement. Collaborative efforts among institutions, higher education systems, communities and businesses are necessary to ensure opportunities are given to students who have left and that they are supported in ways that allow them to complete a degree.

With the ongoing work of the Higher Education Coordinating Council and with the formation of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on State Higher Education Reform by Gov. Scott, it has been recognized by state leaders that cooperation among the different stakeholders of education needs to be present in order for residents of Florida to have access to an efficient, affordable and high-quality postsecondary education. Florida is in the midst of some promising first steps using collaborative efforts to improve degree completion among adults with some credit but no degree (Finish Up, Florida!, Project Win-Win), but the space exists for more institutional and statewide work around this issue. The students targeted to complete degrees as a part of Project Win-Win and Finish Up, Florida! represent less than 5-percent of the total Florida population of working-aged adults who left college without a degree. We hope this report continues to raise awareness of the importance of this issue and encourages adoption of policies that lead to an increase in college degree attainment among adults in our state.

The views expressed in this policy brief were developed independently and do not reflect the opinions of the universities, colleges, and partner organization with which the Florida C.A.N.! leadership team and staff are affiliated.

³⁶ Council for Adult & Experiential Learning, "Fueling the Race to Postsecondary Success: A 48-institution Study of Prior Learning Assessment and Adult Student Outcomes." March 2010, http://www.cael.org/pdf/PLA_Fueling-the-Race.pdf.

Appendix A: Working-aged adults (25-64) with some college, no degree and degree attainment in Florida by county and United States: 2010

County	# of Working-aged adults (residents aged 25-64)	# of Working-aged Adults with Some College, No Degree	% of Working-aged Adults with Some College, No Degree	# of Working-aged Adults with 2-year Degree of Higher	% of Working-aged Adults with 2-year Degree of Higher
Alachua	116,123	20,438	17.60%	62,869	54.14%
Baker	14,251	2,063	14.48%	2,244	15.75%
Bay	89,881	23,474	26.12%	28,717	31.95%
Bradford	16,057	3,405	21.21%	2,649	16.50%
Brevard	280,910	68,233	24.29%	112,403	40.01%
Broward	950,315	197,424	20.77%	397,151	41.79%
Calhoun	7,754	1,335	17.22%	1,272	16.40%
Charlotte	74,520	18,566	24.91%	23,834	31.98%
Citrus	66,485	15,619	23.49%	16,955	25.50%
Clay	99,850	26,613	26.65%	35,446	35.50%
Collier	152,493	28,962	18.99%	53,259	34.93%
Columbia	34,785	7,985	22.96%	8,499	24.43%
DeSoto	16,825	2,816	16.74%	2,659	15.80%
Dixie	8,372	1,864	22.26%	907	10.83%
Duval	466,735	113,337	24.28%	165,414	35.44%
Escambia	152,235	38,156	25.06%	52,787	34.67%
Flagler	45,769	12,654	27.65%	15,296	33.42%
Franklin	6,805	1,323	19.44%	1,487	21.85%
Gadsden	24,791	4,984	20.10%	4,353	17.56%
Gilchrist	8,269	1,863	22.53%	1,430	17.29%
Glades	6,474	1,425	22.01%	1,104	17.05%
Gulf	9,269	1,735	18.72%	1,898	20.48%
Hamilton	8,029	1,331	16.58%	1,153	14.36%
Hardee	13,458	2,317	17.22%	1,627	12.09%
Hendry	19,085	2,623	13.74%	2,380	12.47%
Hernando	81,895	21,491	26.24%	21,773	26.59%
Highlands	42,481	9,176	21.60%	10,004	23.55%
Hillsborough	645,328	128,413	19.90%	264,909	41.05%
Holmes	10,573	1,810	17.12%	1,700	16.08%
Indian River	64,459	15,382	23.86%	22,149	34.36%
Jackson	27,106	6,397	23.60%	5,749	21.21%
Jefferson	7,721	1,783	23.09%	1,626	21.06%
Lafayette	4,016	777	19.35%	837	20.84%
Lake	142,292	35,743	25.12%	43,573	30.62%
Lee	303,217	69,844	23.03%	100,246	33.06%
Leon	130,026	26,312	20.24%	66,987	51.52%
Levy	21,128	4,738	22.43%	4,438	21.01%
Liberty	4,629	510	11.02%	894	19.31%
Madison	10,276	1,847	17.97%	1,720	16.74%
Manatee	157,559	32,846	20.85%	57,102	36.24%
Marion	157,834	34,523	21.87%	43,493	27.56%
Martin	70,231	15,658	22.29%	29,045	41.36%
Miami-Dade	1,316,712	213,370	16.20%	496,680	37.72%
Monroe	44,943	10,703	23.81%	17,319	38.54%
Nassau	38,953	8,936	22.94%	11,873	30.48%
Okaloosa	97,324	25,589	26.29%	37,658	38.69%
Okeechobee	19,530	3,722	19.06%	3,599	18.43%
Orange	603,051	117,676	19.51%	258,020	42.79%
Osceola	137,049	30,712	22.41%	41,786	30.49%
Palm Beach	651,035	133,221	20.46%	273,206	41.96%
Pasco	233,334	56,278	24.12%	77,304	33.13%
Pinellas	492,907	110,745	22.47%	192,641	39.08%
Polk	293,803	58,163	19.80%	81,419	27.71%
Putnam	37,500	6,714	17.90%	7,162	19.10%
Santa Rosa	81,329	20,781	25.55%	30,240	37.18%
Sarasota	179,799	41,229	22.93%	68,642	38.18%
Seminole	229,975	52,709	22.92%	106,209	46.18%
St. Johns	97,405	21,768	22.35%	48,570	49.86%
St. Lucie	135,241	31,362	23.19%	36,843	27.24%
Sumter	38,902	8,386	21.56%	8,975	23.07%
Suwannee	20,291	4,374	21.56%	3,627	17.87%
Taylor	11,911	2,764	23.21%	2,233	18.75%
Union	8,704	1,479	16.99%	1,279	14.69%
Volusia	253,825	63,925	25.18%	83,687	32.97%
Wakulla	17,090	3,942	23.07%	4,402	25.76%
Walton	30,101	7,217	23.98%	9,537	31.68%
Washington	13,341	3,121	23.39%	2,499	18.73%
Florida	9,803,980	2,136,681	21.79%	3,577,999	36.50%
United States	163,855,408	36,209,776	22.10%	62,783,181	38.32%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey

Appendix B: Educational attainment for Working-aged adults (25-64) in Florida by county and United States: 2010

	Alachua		Baker		Bay		Bradford		Brevard	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64)†:	116,123	58.07%	14,251	72.71%	89,881	69.51%	16,057	69.90%	280,910	65.20%
Less than 9th grade	3,292	2.83%	652	4.58%	2,221	2.47%	521	3.24%	4,036	1.44%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	6,623	5.70%	2,166	15.20%	7,868	8.75%	3,007	18.73%	16,190	5.76%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	22,901	19.72%	7,126	50.00%	27,601	30.71%	6,475	40.33%	80,048	28.50%
Some college, no degree	20,438	17.60%	2,063	14.48%	23,474	26.12%	3,405	21.21%	68,233	24.29%
Associate's degree	13,424	11.56%	1,247	8.75%	9,419	10.48%	1,305	8.13%	33,609	11.96%
Bachelor's degree	26,035	22.42%	628	4.41%	12,707	14.14%	752	4.68%	50,476	17.97%
Graduate or professional degree	23,410	20.16%	369	2.59%	6,591	7.33%	592	3.69%	28,318	10.08%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	62,869	54.14%	2,244	15.75%	28,717	31.95%	2,649	16.50%	112,403	40.01%

	Broward		Calhoun		Charlotte		Citrus		Clay	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	950,315	70.97%	7,754	68.72%	74,520	54.90%	66,485	56.40%	99,850	73.24%
Less than 9th grade	33,737	3.55%	588	7.58%	1,416	1.90%	2,057	3.09%	1,618	1.62%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	64,760	6.81%	1,191	15.36%	5,542	7.44%	6,085	9.15%	6,218	6.23%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	257,243	27.07%	3,368	43.44%	25,162	33.77%	25,769	38.76%	29,955	30.00%
Some college, no degree	197,424	20.77%	1,335	17.22%	18,566	24.91%	15,619	23.49%	26,613	26.65%
Associate's degree	93,525	9.84%	437	5.64%	7,792	10.46%	6,170	9.28%	10,814	10.83%
Bachelor's degree	200,067	21.05%	584	7.53%	10,933	14.67%	6,933	10.43%	17,081	17.11%
Graduate or professional degree	103,559	10.90%	251	3.24%	5,109	6.86%	3,852	5.79%	7,551	7.56%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	397,151	41.79%	1,272	16.40%	23,834	31.98%	16,955	25.50%	35,446	35.50%

	Collier		Columbia		DeSoto		Dixie		Duval	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	152,493	60.06%	34,785	67.44%	16,825	63.05%	8,372	64.49%	466,735	71.92%
Less than 9th grade	12,651	8.30%	1,390	4.00%	2,906	17.27%	714	8.53%	12,512	2.68%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	13,984	9.17%	4,060	11.67%	2,779	16.52%	1,481	17.69%	37,180	7.97%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	43,637	28.62%	12,851	36.94%	5,665	33.67%	3,406	40.68%	138,292	29.63%
Some college, no degree	28,962	18.99%	7,985	22.96%	2,816	16.74%	1,864	22.26%	113,337	24.28%
Associate's degree	11,354	7.45%	3,242	9.32%	850	5.05%	306	3.66%	44,575	9.55%
Bachelor's degree	27,062	17.75%	3,432	9.87%	1,193	7.09%	317	3.79%	83,787	17.95%
Graduate or professional degree	14,843	9.73%	1,825	5.25%	616	3.66%	284	3.39%	37,052	7.94%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	53,259	34.93%	8,499	24.43%	2,659	15.80%	907	10.83%	165,414	35.44%

	Escambia		Flagler		Franklin		Gadsden		Gilchrist	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	152,235	65.34%	45,769	62.36%	6,805	71.72%	24,791	71.44%	8,269	63.40%
Less than 9th grade	3,959	2.60%	704	1.54%	405	5.95%	1,522	6.14%	249	3.01%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	13,105	8.61%	2,612	5.71%	1,085	15.94%	3,839	15.49%	964	11.66%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	44,228	29.05%	14,503	31.69%	2,505	36.81%	10,093	40.71%	3,763	45.51%
Some college, no degree	38,156	25.06%	12,654	27.65%	1,323	19.44%	4,984	20.10%	1,863	22.53%
Associate's degree	15,839	10.40%	5,269	11.51%	473	6.95%	1,515	6.11%	674	8.15%
Bachelor's degree	24,006	15.77%	7,520	16.43%	739	10.86%	1,971	7.95%	437	5.28%
Graduate or professional degree	12,942	8.50%	2,507	5.48%	275	4.04%	867	3.50%	319	3.86%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	52,787	34.67%	15,296	33.42%	1,487	21.85%	4,353	17.56%	1,430	17.29%

	Glades		Gulf		Hamilton		Hardee		Hendry	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	6,474	63.85%	9,269	70.83%	8,029	68.68%	13,458	67.05%	19,085	68.15%
Less than 9th grade	755	11.66%	408	4.40%	625	7.78%	3,148	23.39%	4,310	22.58%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	1,120	17.30%	1,621	17.49%	1,235	15.38%	2,182	16.21%	3,006	15.75%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	2,070	31.97%	3,607	38.91%	3,685	45.90%	4,184	31.09%	6,766	35.45%
Some college, no degree	1,425	22.01%	1,735	18.72%	1,331	16.58%	2,317	17.22%	2,623	13.74%
Associate's degree	451	6.97%	681	7.35%	559	6.96%	482	3.58%	715	3.75%
Bachelor's degree	452	6.98%	684	7.38%	409	5.09%	804	5.97%	1,152	6.04%
Graduate or professional degree	201	3.10%	533	5.75%	185	2.30%	341	2.53%	513	2.69%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	1,104	17.05%	1,898	20.48%	1,153	14.36%	1,627	12.09%	2,380	12.47%

	Hernando		Highlands		Hillsborough		Holmes		Indian River	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	81,895	60.06%	42,481	52.73%	645,328	71.08%	10,573	67.90%	64,459	58.75%
Less than 9th grade	1,881	2.30%	3,790	8.92%	26,310	4.08%	819	7.75%	3,324	5.16%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	7,276	8.88%	5,059	11.91%	51,306	7.95%	1,600	15.13%	5,911	9.17%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	29,474	35.99%	14,452	34.02%	174,390	27.02%	4,644	43.92%	17,693	27.45%
Some college, no degree	21,491	26.24%	9,176	21.60%	128,413	19.90%	1,810	17.12%	15,382	23.86%
Associate's degree	8,050	9.83%	3,675	8.65%	67,844	10.51%	532	5.03%	6,000	9.31%
Bachelor's degree	10,123	12.36%	4,351	10.24%	132,918	20.60%	792	7.49%	10,860	16.85%
Graduate or professional degree	3,600	4.40%	1,978	4.66%	64,147	9.94%	376	3.56%	5,289	8.21%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	21,773	26.59%	10,004	23.55%	264,909	41.05%	1,700	16.08%	22,149	34.36%

	Jackson		Jefferson		Lafayette		Lake		Lee	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	27,106	69.08%	7,721	65.73%	4,016	62.39%	142,292	61.66%	303,217	62.45%
Less than 9th grade	2,014	7.43%	414	5.36%	167	4.16%	4,367	3.07%	14,530	4.79%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	3,515	12.97%	867	11.23%	521	12.97%	12,470	8.76%	24,350	8.03%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	9,431	34.79%	3,031	39.26%	1,714	42.68%	46,139	32.43%	94,247	31.08%
Some college, no degree	6,397	23.60%	1,783	23.09%	777	19.35%	35,743	25.12%	69,844	23.03%
Associate's degree	2,155	7.95%	466	6.04%	436	10.86%	14,211	9.99%	26,728	8.81%
Bachelor's degree	2,353	8.68%	704	9.12%	265	6.60%	20,060	14.10%	49,463	16.31%
Graduate or professional degree	1,241	4.58%	456	5.91%	136	3.39%	9,302	6.54%	24,055	7.93%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	5,749	21.21%	1,626	21.06%	837	20.84%	43,573	30.62%	100,246	33.06%

	Leon		Levy		Liberty		Madison		Manatee	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	130,026	59.90%	21,128	66.94%	4,629	68.15%	10,276	68.07%	157,559	62.43%
Less than 9th grade	2,028	1.56%	829	3.92%	370	7.99%	599	5.83%	7,626	4.84%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	8,443	6.49%	2,586	12.24%	805	17.39%	1,488	14.48%	12,551	7.97%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	26,256	20.19%	8,537	40.41%	2,050	44.29%	4,622	44.98%	47,434	30.11%
Some college, no degree	26,312	20.24%	4,738	22.43%	510	11.02%	1,847	17.97%	32,846	20.85%
Associate's degree	11,252	8.65%	1,923	9.10%	158	3.41%	625	6.08%	15,770	10.01%
Bachelor's degree	33,135	25.48%	1,872	8.86%	526	11.36%	790	7.69%	26,983	17.13%
Graduate or professional degree	22,600	17.38%	643	3.04%	210	4.54%	305	2.97%	14,349	9.11%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	66,987	51.52%	4,438	21.01%	894	19.31%	1,720	16.74%	57,102	36.24%

	Marion		Martin		Miami-Dade		Monroe		Nassau	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	157,834	60.17%	70,231	59.32%	1,316,712	69.37%	44,943	72.71%	38,953	70.38%
Less than 9th grade	5,303	3.36%	3,203	4.56%	99,359	7.55%	1,142	2.54%	747	1.92%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	16,346	10.36%	4,381	6.24%	132,986	10.10%	2,898	6.45%	3,577	9.18%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	58,169	36.85%	17,944	25.55%	374,317	28.43%	12,881	28.66%	13,820	35.48%
Some college, no degree	34,523	21.87%	15,658	22.29%	213,370	16.20%	10,703	23.81%	8,936	22.94%
Associate's degree	15,778	10.00%	7,411	10.55%	124,985	9.49%	4,642	10.33%	3,387	8.70%
Bachelor's degree	18,329	11.61%	14,190	20.20%	240,078	18.23%	8,695	19.35%	5,301	13.61%
Graduate or professional degree	9,386	5.95%	7,444	10.60%	131,617	10.00%	3,982	8.86%	3,185	8.18%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	43,493	27.56%	29,045	41.36%	496,680	37.72%	17,319	38.54%	11,873	30.48%

	Okaloosa		Okeechobee		Orange		Osceola		Palm Beach	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	97,324	69.19%	19,530	64.37%	603,051	71.14%	137,049	72.26%	651,035	63.12%
Less than 9th grade	2,062	2.12%	2,404	12.31%	23,340	3.87%	5,905	4.31%	36,339	5.58%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	5,408	5.56%	2,904	14.87%	43,610	7.23%	11,271	8.22%	47,379	7.28%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	26,607	27.34%	6,901	35.34%	160,405	26.60%	47,375	34.57%	160,890	24.71%
Some college, no degree	25,589	26.29%	3,722	19.06%	117,676	19.51%	30,712	22.41%	133,221	20.46%
Associate's degree	11,202	11.51%	1,183	6.06%	65,495	10.86%	15,000	10.94%	61,317	9.42%
Bachelor's degree	16,975	17.44%	1,835	9.40%	133,144	22.08%	19,431	14.18%	139,016	21.35%
Graduate or professional degree	9,481	9.74%	581	2.97%	59,381	9.85%	7,355	5.37%	72,873	11.19%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	37,658	38.69%	3,599	18.43%	258,020	42.79%	41,786	30.49%	273,206	41.96%

	Pasco		Pinellas		Polk		Putnam		St. Johns	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	233,334	64.94%	492,907	65.62%	293,803	65.40%	37,500	65.44%	97,405	70.31%
Less than 9th grade	5,801	2.49%	11,317	2.30%	17,005	5.79%	2,138	5.70%	1,278	1.31%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	18,751	8.04%	36,745	7.45%	31,565	10.74%	5,476	14.60%	4,336	4.45%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	75,200	32.23%	141,459	28.70%	105,651	35.96%	16,010	42.69%	21,453	22.02%
Some college, no degree	56,278	24.12%	110,745	22.47%	58,163	19.80%	6,714	17.90%	21,768	22.35%
Associate's degree	24,005	10.29%	49,590	10.06%	26,040	8.86%	2,829	7.54%	9,484	9.74%
Bachelor's degree	38,455	16.48%	98,809	20.05%	39,210	13.35%	2,992	7.98%	25,933	26.62%
Graduate or professional degree	14,844	6.36%	44,242	8.98%	16,169	5.50%	1,341	3.58%	13,153	13.50%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	77,304	33.13%	192,641	39.08%	81,419	27.71%	7,162	19.10%	48,570	49.86%

	St. Lucie		Santa Rosa		Sarasota		Seminole		Sumter	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	135,241	64.81%	81,329	72.79%	179,799	56.97%	229,975	72.06%	38,902	50.27%
Less than 9th grade	6,475	4.79%	1,892	2.33%	3,133	1.74%	4,031	1.75%	1,699	4.37%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	13,942	10.31%	6,365	7.83%	11,155	6.20%	13,072	5.68%	4,601	11.83%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	46,619	34.47%	22,051	27.11%	55,640	30.95%	53,954	23.46%	15,241	39.18%
Some college, no degree	31,362	23.19%	20,781	25.55%	41,229	22.93%	52,709	22.92%	8,386	21.56%
Associate's degree	12,788	9.46%	9,147	11.25%	17,480	9.72%	24,182	10.52%	2,971	7.64%
Bachelor's degree	16,177	11.96%	14,741	18.13%	32,572	18.12%	55,836	24.28%	3,829	9.84%
Graduate or professional degree	7,878	5.83%	6,352	7.81%	18,590	10.34%	26,191	11.39%	2,175	5.59%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	36,843	27.24%	30,240	37.18%	68,642	38.18%	106,209	46.18%	8,975	23.07%

	Suwannee		Taylor		Union		Volusia		Wakulla	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	20,291	65.32%	11,911	68.38%	8,704	73.36%	253,825	63.44%	17,090	75.75%
Less than 9th grade	812	4.00%	393	3.30%	356	4.09%	6,310	2.49%	522	3.05%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	2,341	11.54%	1,698	14.26%	1,533	17.61%	20,151	7.94%	1,818	10.64%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	9,137	45.03%	4,823	40.49%	4,057	46.61%	79,752	31.42%	6,406	37.48%
Some college, no degree	4,374	21.56%	2,764	23.21%	1,479	16.99%	63,925	25.18%	3,942	23.07%
Associate's degree	1,551	7.64%	872	7.32%	496	5.70%	27,966	11.02%	1,449	8.48%
Bachelor's degree	1,367	6.74%	864	7.25%	524	6.02%	37,056	14.60%	1,836	10.74%
Graduate or professional degree	709	3.49%	497	4.17%	259	2.98%	18,665	7.35%	1,117	6.54%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	3,627	17.87%	2,233	18.75%	1,279	14.69%	83,687	32.97%	4,402	25.76%

	Walton		Washington		Florida		United States	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Working aged adults (25-64):	30,101	71.12%	13,341	70.97%	9,803,980	66.05%	163,855,408	69.67%
Less than 9th grade	1,161	3.86%	721	5.40%	436,359	4.45%	7,972,497	4.87%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	3,360	11.16%	1,721	12.90%	817,557	8.34%	12,539,457	7.65%
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	8,826	29.32%	5,279	39.57%	2,835,384	28.92%	44,350,497	27.07%
Some college, no degree	7,217	23.98%	3,121	23.39%	2,136,681	21.79%	36,209,776	22.10%
Associate's degree	2,373	7.88%	789	5.91%	960,424	9.80%	13,832,109	8.44%
Bachelor's degree	4,933	16.39%	1,138	8.53%	1,739,410	17.74%	31,423,077	19.18%
Graduate or professional degree	2,231	7.41%	572	4.29%	878,165	8.96%	17,527,995	10.70%
Has a 2-year degree or higher	9,537	31.68%	2,499	18.73%	3,577,999	36.50%	62,783,181	38.32%

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

Notes: Florida and U.S. data based on 1-year ACS, county numbers on 5-year ACS

†The percentage listed here is the percentage of working-aged adults the population of people aged 18 and over in each county

For sortable tables with educational attainment data for all Florida counties, visit floridacollegeaccess.org

For more information about the source of this data, visit factfinder2.census.gov