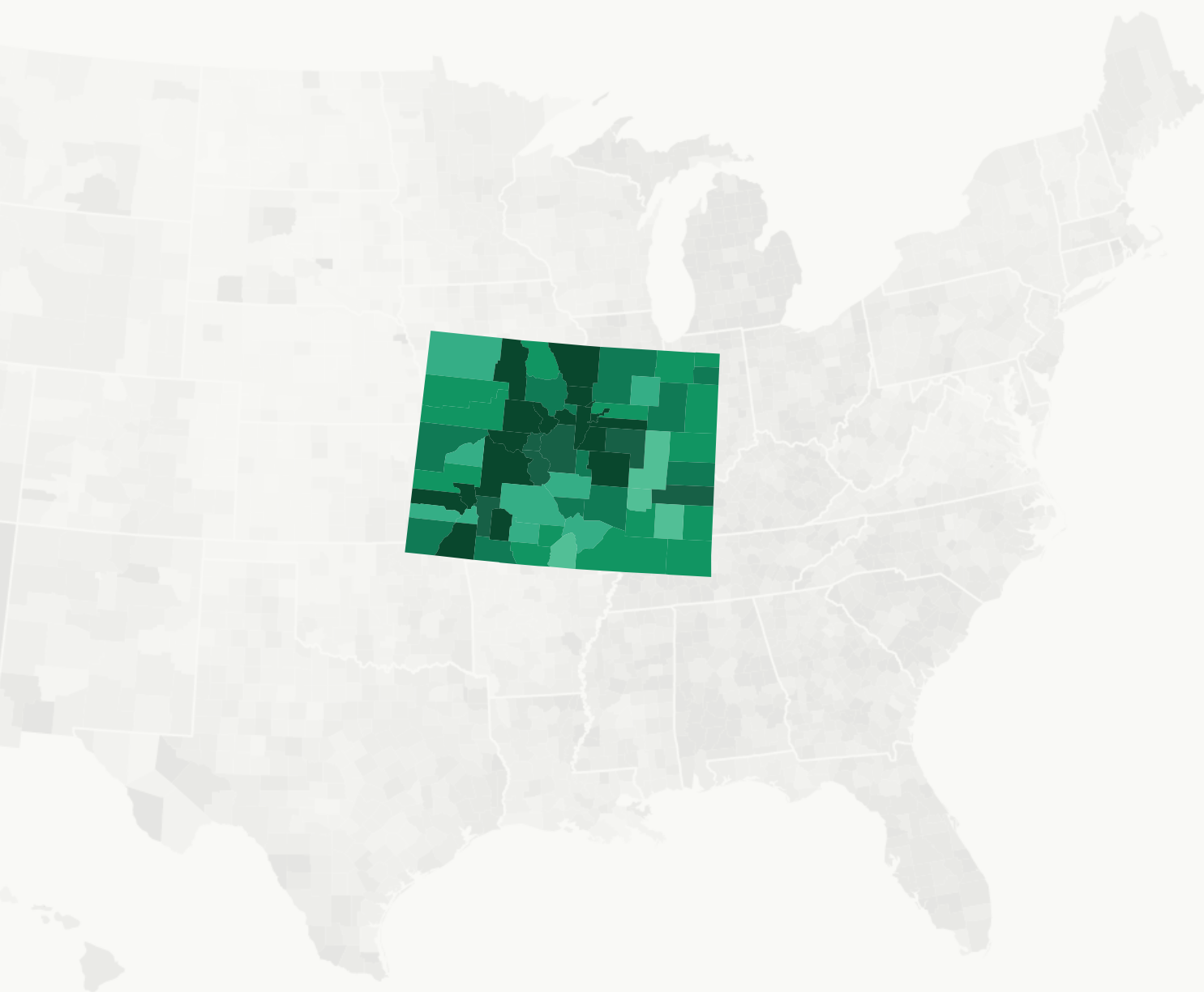


A STRONGER **COLORADO** *through* HIGHER EDUCATION



Efforts to boost college attainment in Colorado are key to achieving Goal 2025

In Colorado, 47 percent of the state's 2.8 million working-age adults (25-64 years old) hold a two- or four-year college degree, according to 2011 Census data. Colorado's attainment rate is increasing slowly; last year, the rate was 46 percent. Colorado's rate of higher education attainment is well above the national average. This year, the percentage of Americans between age 25 and 64 who hold a two- or four-year degree is 38.7 percent. This rate is rising, but only slowly. In 2010, the rate was 38.3 percent; in 2009, it was 38.1.

Still, there is reason for concern about the educational trends in Colorado. The best indicator of where attainment rates are heading is the rate among young adults — those between the ages of 25 and 34. In Colorado, 2011 Census data put the attainment rate of these young adults at 45.5 percent — lower than that of the adult population as a whole, though higher than the national rate of 40.1 percent.

Despite its relative success, Colorado must do better. In this state and nationally, college attainment rates must increase rapidly and steadily to reach 60 percent by 2025. If the current rate of degree production continues, about 53 percent of Colorado's adult population — 1.4 million people — will hold a college degree in 2025. To reach 60 percent attainment among its projected 2025 population of 2,715,348, Colorado will need to add more than 195,000 degrees to that total.

By now, most people understand why increasing attainment is so important — both to themselves and their communities. Experts from the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University say that, by 2018, 609,000 of the expected 924,000

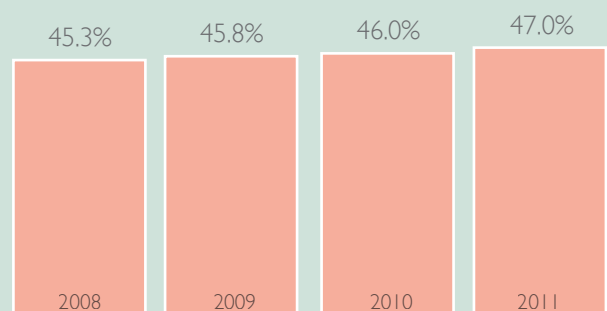
job vacancies in Colorado will require postsecondary credentials. Indeed, 67 percent of all Colorado jobs will require postsecondary education by 2018.

Clearly, the state's economic future depends on producing more college graduates — and an excellent place to begin is with those who have attended college but not earned a credential. In 2011, more than 646,000 Colorado adults — 23 percent of the adult population — had gone to college but lacked either a two- or four-year degree. Encouraging and helping these adults to complete degrees would go a long way toward helping Colorado reach the 60 percent goal.

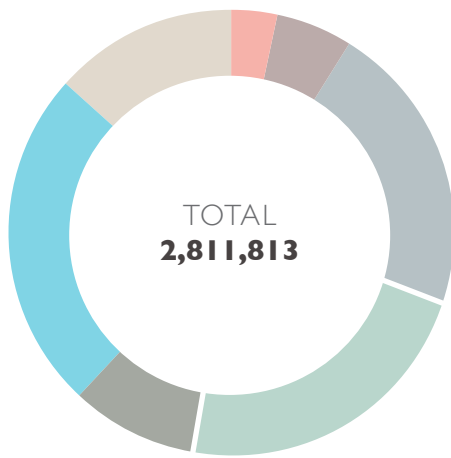
To increase attainment, states must work systematically to close achievement gaps based on race, income, geography and other factors. As in past years, this report lists an attainment rate for each Colorado county. The data show that increasing attainment is a particular challenge in rural counties, so assuring that all communities have access to high-quality higher education is essential. Colorado must also increase college success among the fast-growing groups that will account for a growing proportion of the state's population, including working adults, low-income and first-generation students, and students of color. Meeting the educational needs of these 21st century students will help build Colorado's economy and ensure a bright future for the state.

Tracking the trend

Percentage of the state's working-age population (25-64) with at least an associate degree



Levels of education for Colorado adults (ages 25-64)

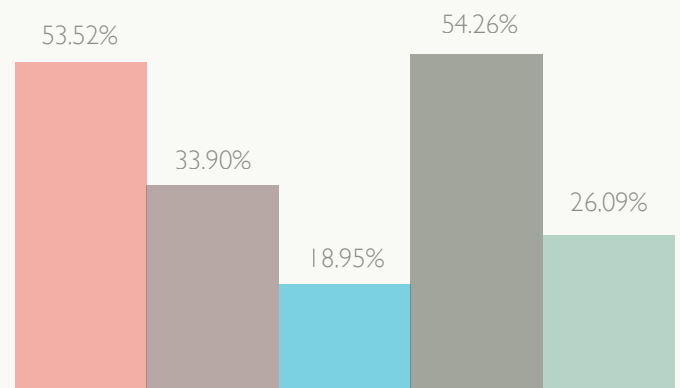


Less than ninth grade	98,201	3.49%
Ninth to 12th grade, no diploma	154,951	5.51%
High school graduate (including equivalency)	591,001	21.02%
Some college, no degree	646,551	22.99%
Associate degree	253,298	9.01%
Bachelor's degree	693,924	24.68%
Graduate or professional degree	373,887	13.30%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey

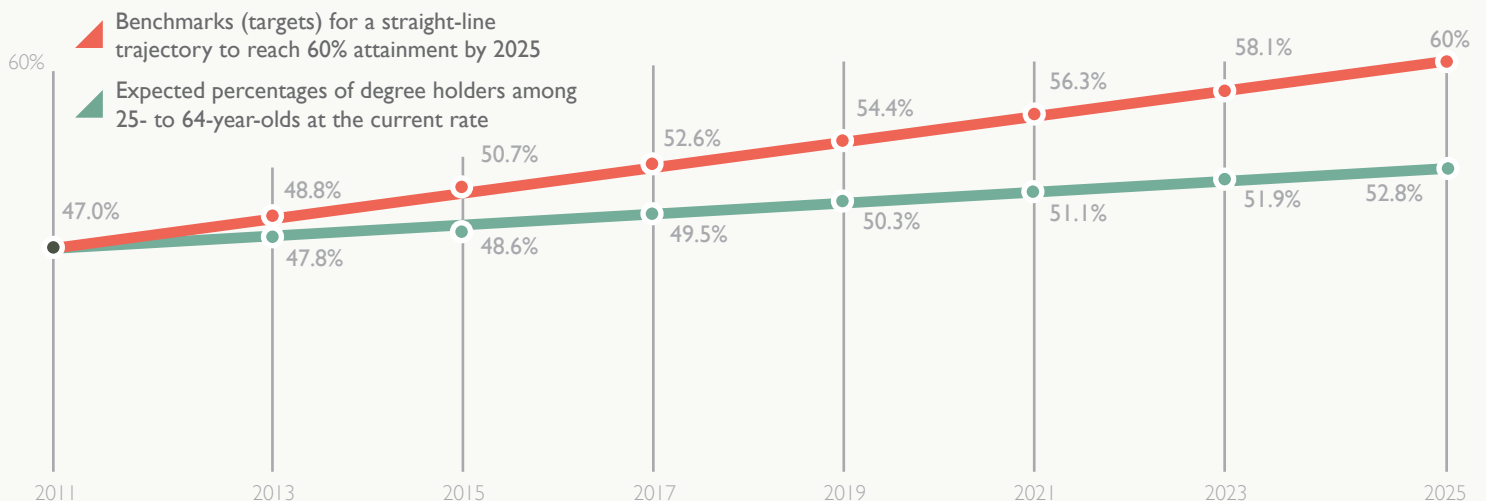
Degree-attainment rates among Colorado adults (ages 25-64), by population group

White	53.52%
Black	33.90%
Hispanic	18.95%
Asian	54.26%
Native American	26.09%



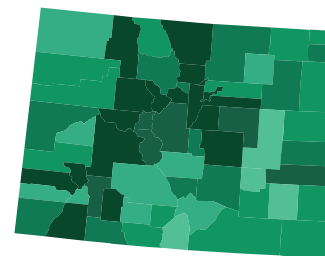
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-11 American Community Survey PUMS File

The path to 60% degree attainment in Colorado



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, 2010 & 2011 American Community Survey

Percentage of Colorado adults (ages 25-64) with at least an associate degree, by county



Adams	30.11	Conejos	30.64	Fremont	22.95	Lake	39.28	Morgan	26.28	Saguache	25.98
Alamosa	33.21	Costilla	19.59	Garfield	32.86	La Plata	48.26	Otero	28.61	San Juan	26.05
Arapahoe	47.79	Crowley	17.30	Gilpin	38.51	Larimer	54.53	Ouray	49.03	San Miguel	53.12
Archuleta	38.43	Custer	37.52	Grand	37.23	Las Animas	33.18	Park	41.57	Sedgwick	32.21
Baca	33.01	Delta	27.55	Gunnison	55.06	Lincoln	21.08	Phillips	33.83	Summit	55.27
Bent	18.35	Denver	48.90	Hinsdale	40.37	Logan	29.79	Pitkin	63.50	Teller	38.14
Boulder	65.20	Dolores	25.31	Huerfano	27.66	Mesa	36.94	Prowers	33.28	Washington	33.61
Broomfield	58.79	Douglas	64.48	Jackson	31.22	Mineral	49.65	Pueblo	33.62	Weld	36.41
Chaffee	39.46	Eagle	51.40	Jefferson	50.03	Moffat	23.52	Rio Blanco	33.05	Yuma	29.17
Cheyenne	33.53	Elbert	42.70	Kiowa	42.64	Montezuma	34.59	Rio Grande	25.90		
Clear Creek	45.32	El Paso	46.87	Kit Carson	29.83	Montrose	30.23	Routt	53.98		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-11 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates