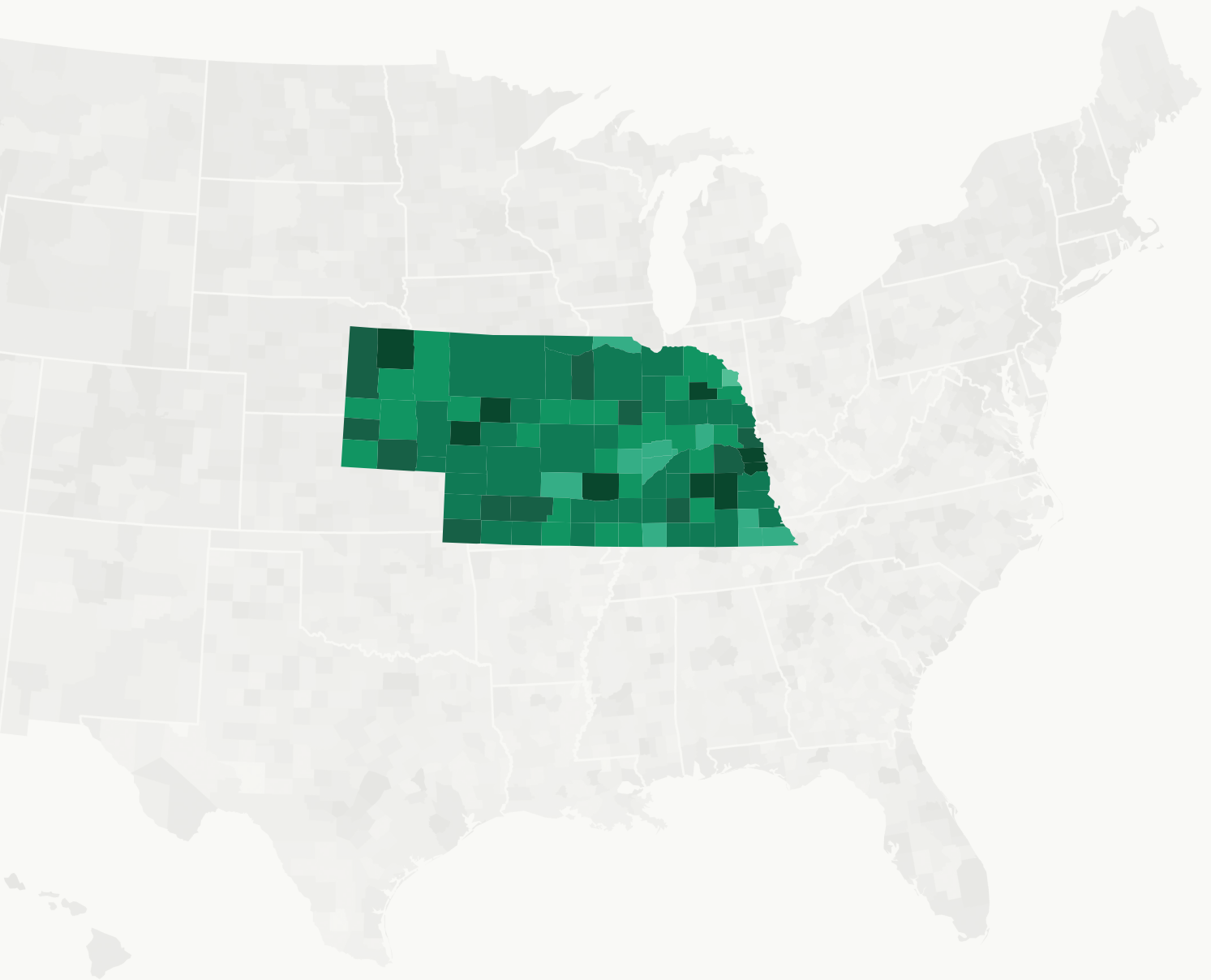


A STRONGER **NEBRASKA** *through* HIGHER EDUCATION



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

In Nebraska, 41.5 percent of the state's 946,000 working-age adults (25-64 years old) hold a two- or four-year college degree, according to 2011 Census data. Nebraska's attainment rate is essentially flat; last year, the rate was 42 percent. Nebraska's rate of higher education attainment is slightly 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.

Also, there is reason for optimism about education trends in Nebraska. The best indicator of where attainment rates are heading is the rate among young adults — those between the ages of 25 and 34. In Nebraska, 2011 Census data put the attainment rate of these young adults at 43.9 percent, higher than that of the adult population as a whole. This suggests that young people in Nebraska are getting the message that higher education is important to their future. Nebraska's attainment rate among young adults is also better than the national rate of 40.1 percent.

Despite its relative success, however, Nebraska must do better. In the state and nationally, college attainment rates must increase more rapidly to reach 60 percent by 2025. If the current rate of degree production continues, about 49 percent of Nebraska's adult population — 408,000 people — will hold a college degree in 2025. To reach 60 percent attainment among its projected 2025 population of 839,822, Nebraska will need to add nearly 96,000 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, 207,000 of the expected 321,000

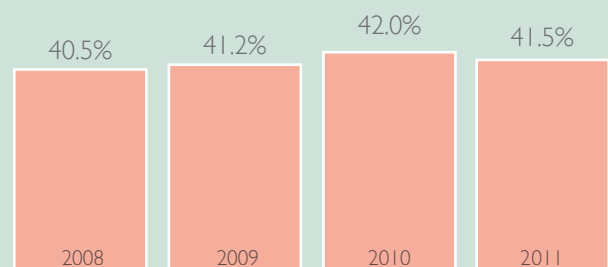
job vacancies in Nebraska will require postsecondary credentials. Indeed, 66 percent of all Nebraska jobs will require postsecondary education by 2018.

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 237,000 Nebraska adults — 25.1 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 Nebraska reach the 60 percent goal.

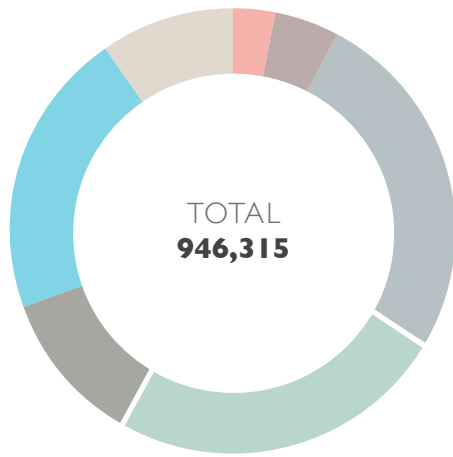
To increase attainment, states must work systematically to close achievement gaps based on race, income, geography and other factors. As in past years, this report lists an attainment rate for each Nebraska county. The data show that increasing attainment is a particular challenge in rural counties, so assuring that all communities have access to high-quality higher education is essential. Nebraska 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 Nebraska'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 Nebraska adults (ages 25-64)

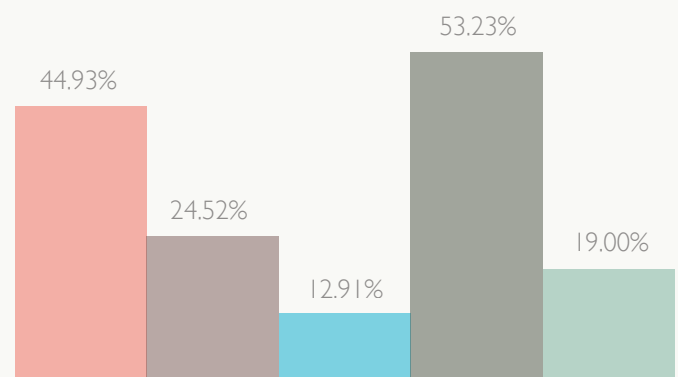


Less than ninth grade	31,338	3.31%
Ninth to 12th grade, no diploma	43,956	4.64%
High school graduate (including equivalency)	241,306	25.50%
Some college, no degree	237,122	25.06%
Associate degree	104,668	11.06%
Bachelor's degree	197,864	20.91%
Graduate or professional degree	90,061	9.52%

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

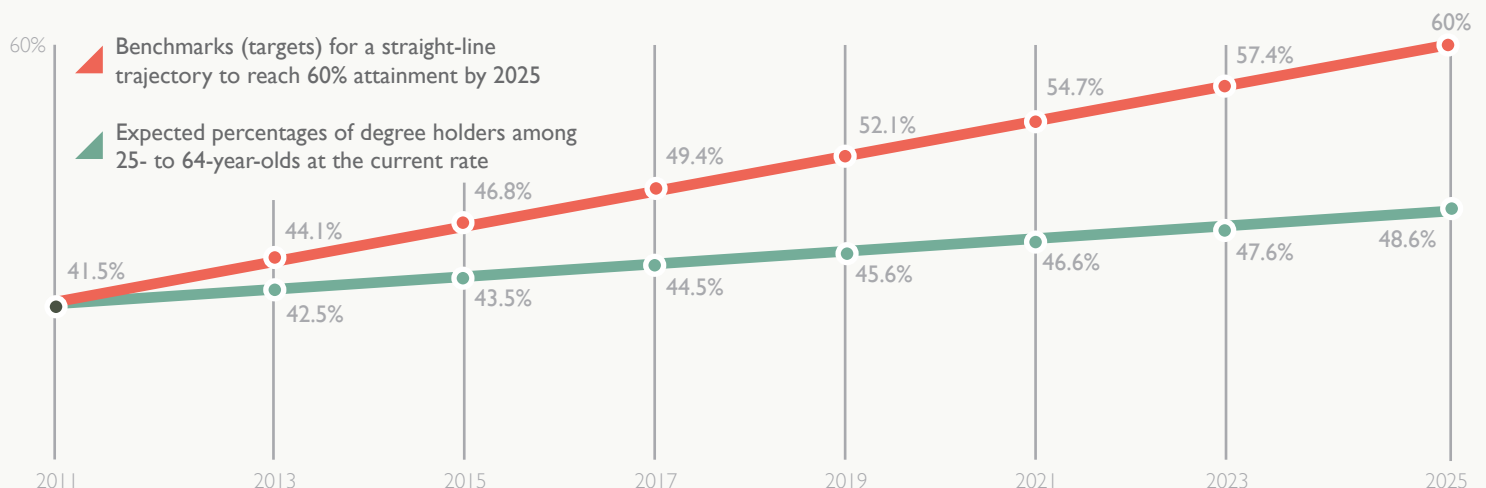
Degree-attainment rates among Nebraska adults (ages 25-64), by population group

White	44.93%
Black	24.52%
Hispanic	12.91%
Asian	53.23%
Native American	19.00%



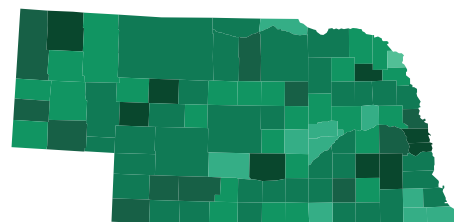
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-11 American Community Survey PUMS File

The path to 60% degree attainment in Nebraska



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

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



Adams	37.43	Cheyenne	40.12	Furnas	30.79	Johnson	23.01	Nuckolls	26.72	Sheridan	32.03
Antelope	34.10	Clay	35.31	Gage	35.26	Kearney	37.91	Otoe	38.83	Sherman	31.89
Arthur	48.15	Colfax	22.25	Garden	33.93	Keith	33.81	Pawnee	27.71	Sioux	42.49
Banner	43.33	Cuming	35.10	Garfield	28.36	Keya Paha	36.76	Perkins	33.55	Stanton	36.22
Blaine	29.81	Custer	35.22	Gosper	33.02	Kimball	31.84	Phelps	36.26	Thayer	37.18
Boone	28.84	Dakota	19.99	Grant	29.74	Knox	33.69	Pierce	32.88	Thomas	38.08
Box Butte	32.36	Dawes	47.14	Greeley	32.85	Lancaster	50.27	Platte	32.62	Thurston	31.52
Boyd	23.80	Dawson	22.56	Hall	28.45	Lincoln	35.56	Polk	35.47	Valley	35.15
Brown	34.32	Deuel	33.69	Hamilton	38.71	Logan	32.34	Red Willow	38.51	Washington	40.61
Buffalo	44.51	Dixon	29.93	Harlan	37.44	Loup	33.23	Richardson	26.11	Wayne	45.68
Burt	37.17	Dodge	29.62	Hayes	39.64	McPherson	36.49	Rock	40.28	Webster	31.56
Butler	33.09	Douglas	45.83	Hitchcock	35.80	Madison	38.53	Saline	28.83	Wheeler	39.00
Cass	37.42	Dundy	42.33	Holt	34.74	Merrick	27.65	Sarpy	47.92	York	37.59
Cedar	32.95	Fillmore	39.62	Hooker	46.31	Morrill	32.94	Saunders	39.92		
Chase	33.88	Franklin	31.52	Howard	26.97	Nance	26.48	Scotts Bluff	33.00		
Cherry	38.34	Frontier	39.36	Jefferson	33.51	Nemaha	36.42	Seward	47.56		

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



Lumina Foundation is an independent, private foundation committed to increasing the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees, certificates and other credentials to 60 percent by 2025. Lumina's outcomes-based approach focuses on helping to design and build an accessible, responsive and accountable higher education system while fostering a national sense of urgency for action to achieve Goal 2025.

