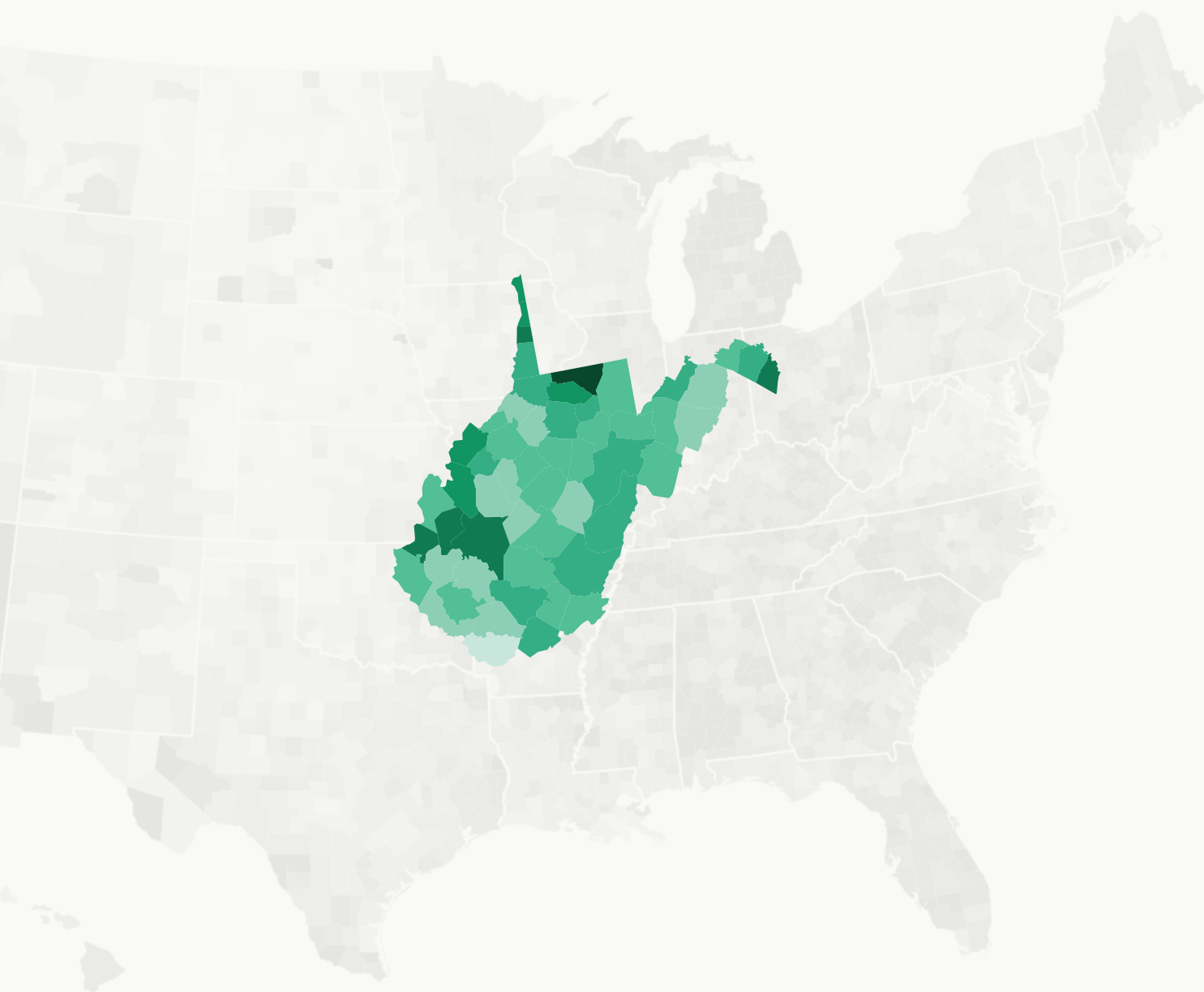


A STRONGER **WEST VIRGINIA** *through* HIGHER EDUCATION



# Efforts to boost college attainment in West Virginia are key to achieving Goal 2025

In West Virginia, 27.8 percent of the state's 993,000 working-age adults (25-64 years old) hold a two- or four-year college degree, according to 2011 Census data. West Virginia's attainment rate is increasing; last year, the rate was 26.1 percent. However, West Virginia's rate of higher education attainment is well below 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 some reason for optimism. The best indicator of where attainment rates are heading is the attainment rate of young adults — those between the ages of 25 and 34. In West Virginia, 2011 Census data put the attainment rate of these young adults at 30.9 percent, considerably higher than that of the adult population as a whole. This suggests that young people in West Virginia are getting the message that higher education is important to their future. However, West Virginia's attainment rate among young adults is still far below the national rate of 40.1 percent.

West Virginia is making some progress, but it has a long way to go. In West Virginia and nationally, college attainment rates must increase more rapidly to reach 60 percent by 2025. If the current rate of degree production continues, only 35.5 percent of West Virginia's adult population — fewer than 315,000 people — will hold a college degree in 2025. To reach 60 percent attainment among its projected 2025 population of 886,531, West Virginia will need to add more than 217,000 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, 115,000 of the expected

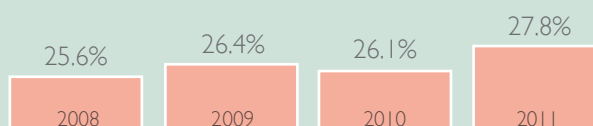
234,000 job vacancies in West Virginia will require postsecondary credentials. Indeed, 49 percent of all West Virginia jobs will require postsecondary education by 2018.

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 185,000 West Virginia adults — 18.7 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 West Virginia reach the 60 percent goal.

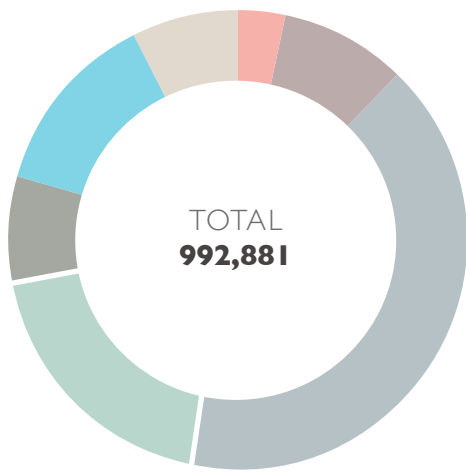
To increase attainment, states must work systematically to close achievement gaps based on race, income, geography and other factors. As in past years, this report lists an attainment rate for each West Virginia county. The data show that increasing attainment is a particular challenge in rural counties,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

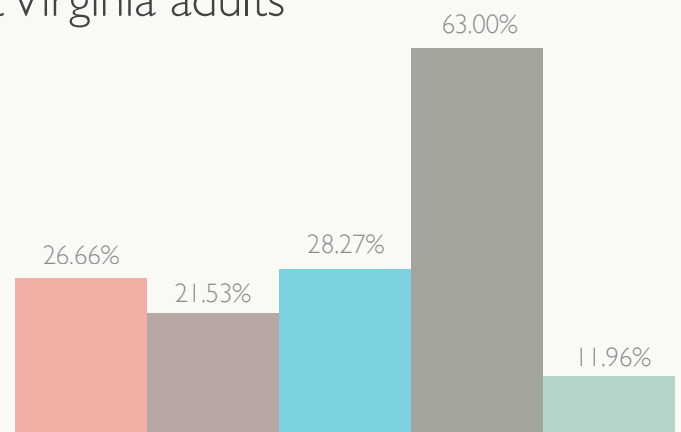


Less than ninth grade	35,094	<b>3.53%</b>
Ninth to 12th grade, no diploma	87,414	<b>8.80%</b>
High school graduate (including equivalency)	409,110	<b>41.20%</b>
Some college, no degree	185,297	<b>18.66%</b>
Associate degree	73,760	<b>7.43%</b>
Bachelor's degree	130,177	<b>13.11%</b>
Graduate or professional degree	72,029	<b>7.25%</b>

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

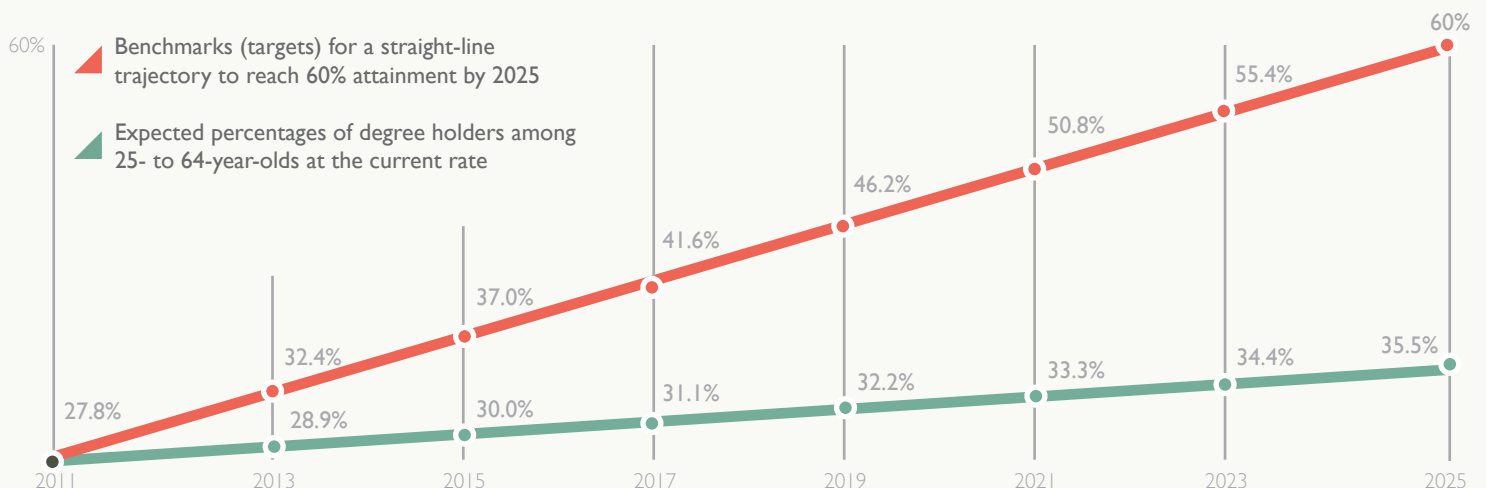
## Degree-attainment rates among West Virginia adults (ages 25-64), by population group

White	<b>26.66%</b>
Black	<b>21.53%</b>
Hispanic	<b>28.27%</b>
Asian	<b>63.00%</b>
Native American	<b>11.96%</b>



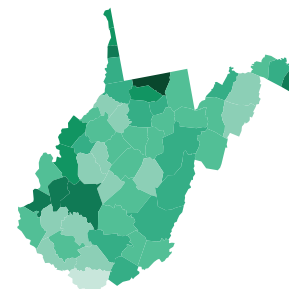
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-11 American Community Survey PUMS File

## The path to 60% degree attainment in West Virginia



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

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



Barbour	18.14	Gilmer	16.74	Lewis	21.67	Monongalia	45.46	Raleigh	24.04	Webster	11.73
Berkeley	26.75	Grant	20.06	Lincoln	13.54	Monroe	19.65	Randolph	25.93	Wetzel	23.22
Boone	14.12	Greenbrier	24.74	Logan	17.73	Morgan	21.68	Ritchie	21.60	Wirt	22.41
Braxton	18.22	Hampshire	14.81	McDowell	10.31	Nicholas	20.58	Roane	14.37	Wood	31.06
Brooke	29.13	Hancock	29.24	Marion	28.49	Ohio	38.55	Summers	20.24	Wyoming	14.96
Cabell	34.73	Hardy	16.41	Marshall	24.55	Pendleton	19.31	Taylor	23.03		
Calhoun	13.70	Harrison	26.33	Mason	20.71	Pleasants	19.14	Tucker	20.71		
Clay	13.94	Jackson	27.92	Mercer	24.56	Pocahontas	25.12	Tyler	15.30		
Doddridge	14.54	Jefferson	38.75	Mineral	23.09	Preston	18.57	Upshur	21.11		
Fayette	16.89	Kanawha	33.42	Mingo	15.86	Putnam	35.08	Wayne	21.93		

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.

