



**55,000
Degrees**



Greater Learning. Greater Earning. Greater Louisville.

2012 Progress Report

As new programs gear up
and the latest data come in,
the challenges are clear.

BY 2020 WE WILL ADD

40,000

bachelor's degrees

15,000

associate degrees

“We must educate ourselves to a better economy”

Arne Duncan,
U.S. Secretary of Education

Louisville was at a crossroads

When 55,000 Degrees was born two years ago, its mission was clear: to dramatically increase the percentage of college-educated Louisville residents by the year 2020.

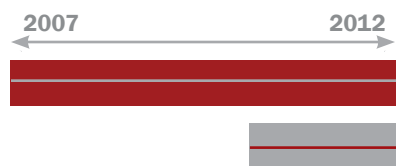
The name of this new public-private partnership – 55,000 Degrees – reflects the bold goal set by a community roundtable of education, business and civic leaders convened by the mayor:

If Louisville added 15,000 associate degrees and 40,000 bachelor’s degrees, half of working-age adults would hold a college diploma — up from a third in 2008.

That would be a game-changing accomplishment for Louisville’s economic competitiveness. And college degrees would open new doors for individuals and families: **Education transforms lives.**

Making the case for college

The link between education and prosperity has never been stronger.

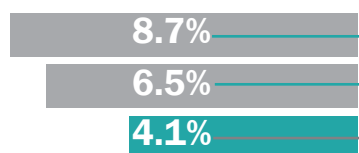


The job advantage

5.8 million jobs lost for workers with a high-school education or less

2.2 million jobs gained for those with bachelor’s degrees

U.S. jobs in five years since December 2007 recession



More education, less unemployment

High-school diploma: **8.7 percent unemployed**

Associate degree or some college: **6.5 percent**

Bachelor's degree: **4.1 percent**

2x

Higher earnings

Workers with a bachelor’s degree or better earn nearly

twice as much today as those with just a high-school diploma.



Lifetime pay

Bachelor's degree: **\$2.4 million**

High-school diploma: **\$1.4 million**

See notes on back page for data sources throughout the report

THIS PROGRESS REPORT REPRESENTS AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE FOR 55,000 DEGREES as we join forces to dramatically increase the number of college graduates in our city.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, WE HAVE INFORMATION THAT REFLECTS THE EARLIEST POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THIS TWO-YEAR-OLD INITIATIVE.

NUMBERS TELL PART OF THE STORY — AND THEY ARE MIXED.

- Our total number of working-age adults with associate degrees or higher **SLIPPED SLIGHTLY** from its gradual upward climb of the previous decade, dropping by almost 4,000 from 2010 to 2011. It's a slight percentage decline — 40.1 to 38.9 — but **CLEARLY IN THE WRONG DIRECTION.**
- The drop reflects a loss of almost 9,000 bachelor's degrees at the same time our population grew and associate and graduate degrees increased.
- **THE BIGGEST DROP OCCURRED AMONG 25- TO 34-YEAR-OLDS** with bachelor's degrees — a loss of talent at an age when people put down roots. One possible explanation: The latest Greater Louisville Project study found Louisville has lagged substantially behind competitor cities in providing well-paying jobs.



- At the same time, our regional college and university **DEGREE COMPLETIONS ARE UP OR HOLDING STEADY.**
- **MORE JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE BETTER PREPARED** for college and careers — a 10 percent increase by one measure.
- And **MORE WORKING-AGE ADULTS ARE IN COLLEGE — A 4.3 PERCENT INCREASE** in just two years. This is a key indicator because our 96,000 local working-age residents with “some college but no degree” are critical to reaching our goal.



- Finally, when it comes to financing college, this report clearly puts in focus issues related to affordability. Students face an intimidating landscape of costs and funding options and need help navigating choices. **THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT NET COSTS TO STUDENTS ARE LEVELING AND ARE ACTUALLY DOWN AT SOME POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS.**

WE WILL CONTINUE TO DIG DEEPER, STUDY DATA, ASK QUESTIONS AND IMPROVE ON OUR EARLY EFFORTS, recognizing that this is a time of dramatic change in the world of post-secondary education. Growth of

online classes and a rapidly-shifting job market will require lifelong learning. Combined with increased financial pressures on post-secondary institutions — including cuts in public funding — we may see a rapid evolution in new ways to prepare for and complete higher education.

IF NUMBERS REFLECT TRENDS, PEOPLE TELL THE REST OF THE STORY.

Hundreds of institutions, organizations and individuals across Louisville have rallied toward this goal this year and said “Count Me In!” to help our community achieve 55,000 Degrees.

This fall the Gheens Foundation and 55,000 Degrees announced a \$20,000 award for the most innovative ideas to increase the number of post-secondary degrees.

WE'VE MADE A GOOD START. BUT THIS REPORT UNDERSCORES THE URGENCY OF OUR MISSION.

It will take all of us working together to reach our goal. We are proud to lead the charge.

Mayor Greg Fischer
Chairman of the Board

Mary Gwen Wheeler
Executive Director

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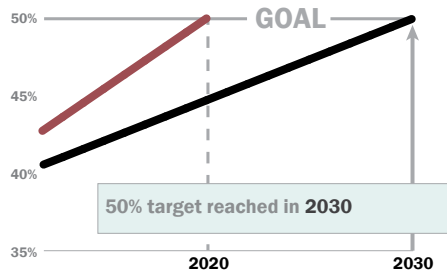
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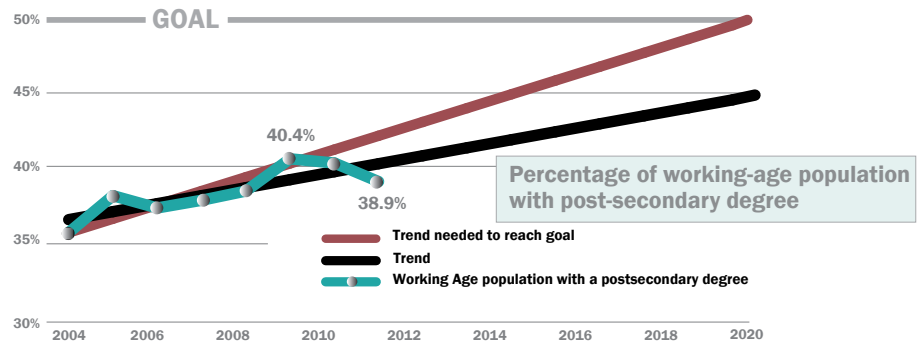
Mr. Michael Kennedy,
Technology Coordinator

It's clear we must rapidly accelerate degree attainment and the retention and attraction of college-educated residents.



Our goal: 55,000 more degrees by 2020, But recent gains are leveling off.

Our key indicator — the number of working-age adults with college degrees — had shown progress from 2004 to 2009. But the best data available — estimates based on census information — show **THE PERCENTAGE DROPPED FROM AN ALL-TIME HIGH OF 40.4 PERCENT IN 2009 TO 38.9 PERCENT LAST YEAR** — 1.5 percentage points. If we continue at our current rate, 45 percent of our working-age population will have a college degree by 2020 — short of our goal.



Where we stand

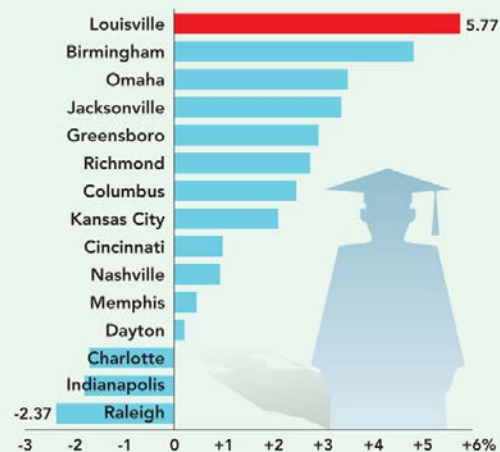
- Our **SHARPEST DECLINE** came with **BACHELOR-DEGREE HOLDERS** – we lost almost 9,000 in a single year. Associate degrees increased by more than 2,500. Graduate degrees were up by almost 2,600.
- **BY AGE**, the **BIGGEST DROP** in 2011 came among **25- TO 34-YEAR-OLDS, REVERSING GAINS OF THE PREVIOUS DECADE**, as reported in the latest Greater Louisville Project report: It found Louisville had a surge in college-educated young adults from 2000 to 2010 that put it at the top of competitor cities in percentage increase – but that dipped in 2011.
- Those 65 and older with a bachelor's degree and above **INCREASED BY 4,000**. While it is good to have a well-educated older population, our initiative focuses on the 25- to 64-year-old traditional workforce.
- An increase in the number of 18- to 24-year-olds who report “some college” – more than 6,000 – represents **POTENTIAL GAINS IN FUTURE YEARS**.

Looking ahead

It's important to dig deeper to better understand these changes in education attainment – to explore patterns related to age, gender, race and migration.

A note about these data: Figures reflect the best information available, but are estimates based on census information. Please keep in mind all estimates have some margin of error.

Percentage Point Change in Four-Year College Attainment Rate for 25 to 34 Year Olds, 2000–2010



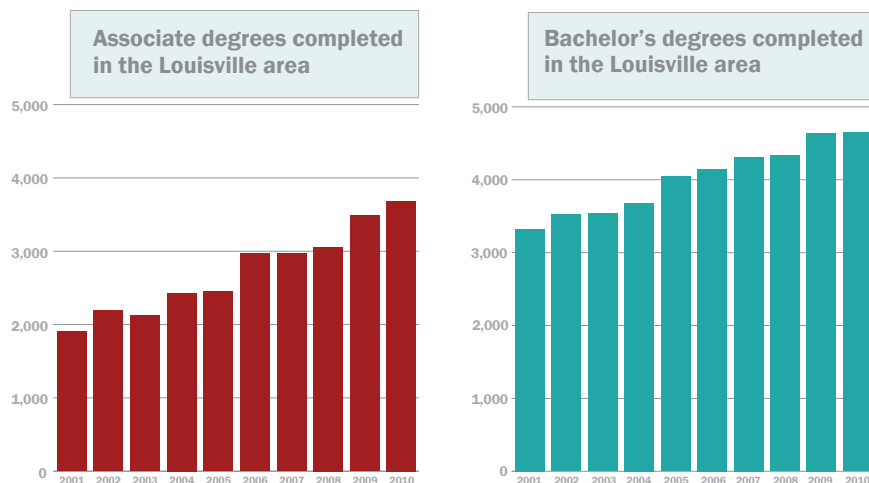
In 2010, 36.5% of Louisville's young adults held a BA or higher.

Note: Chart from 2012 Greater Louisville Project

Good news at local colleges and universities: More degrees are awarded.

While education attainment of the working-age population reflects a variety of factors, it's encouraging to see more degrees completed at Louisville-area colleges and universities.

Associate and bachelor's degree production has been rising over the past decade – and increased by 3 percent from 2009 to 2010, the most recent years for which data is available.



Where we stand

- The most substantial increase was in associate degrees – **UP NEARLY 6 PERCENT.**
- **BACHELOR'S DEGREES WERE UP** by less than 2 percent – reflecting a similar trend from the previous decade.
- Graduate degrees **ROSE BY ABOUT 5 PERCENT.**

The rise in associate degrees represents an opportunity to increase transfers to area universities. Jefferson Community and Technical College has set a goal of doubling its transfers to four-year institutions by 2020.

Eight of our regional post-secondary institutions signed the Greater Louisville Education Commitment and now serve on the 55,000 Degrees board. **Together, they have pledged to graduate a total of 60,000 students by 2020.**

Five key objectives track our progress

Each year 55,000 Degrees charts changes in indicators of five key objectives:

1. Create and support a college-going culture.
2. Use the business community's unique points of leverage to accelerate attainment.
3. Prepare students for success in college, career, citizenship and life.
4. Make post-secondary education accessible and affordable.
5. Increase educational persistence, performance and progress.



Objective 1: Create a college-going culture

A college-going culture is established when all elementary students know the year they will graduate from college.

55,000 Degrees has promoted the value of a college degree through a wide range of channels – from news media to a new website rich with information aimed at guiding students, families and educators. Jefferson County Public Schools and community-based organizations are also spreading the message and promoting the value of college to all ages.

Where we stand

Both Jefferson County Public Schools and the Archdiocese of Louisville have made commitments to raise the profile of college.

TWO MEASURES OF PROGRESS: HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES AND ENROLLMENT IN POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS.

THE JCPS GRADUATION RATE HAS FLUCTUATED IN RECENT YEARS. For 2011, it dipped from 69.3 percent to 67.8 percent. It remains lower than the state average – 78 percent last year – but **BETTER THAN MOST URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AROUND THE NATION.**

The JCPS graduation rate decline is counter-balanced by a decline in dropouts. From 2007 to 2011, JCPS's high-school dropout rate has been nearly cut in half, dropping from 6.4 to 3.7 percent.

JCPS NEARLY REACHED ITS GOAL FOR POST-SECONDARY ENROLLMENTS: IT AIMED FOR 69 PERCENT – AND HIT 67 PERCENT.

More than 97 percent of students at Archdiocesan high schools enrolled in post-secondary schools – 100 percent is its goal.

Looking ahead

Atkinson Elementary, in Louisville's Portland neighborhood, could become a role model for elementary schools around Jefferson County. It is **INFUSING A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE** into activities for all students. College pennants in the school's hallways provide inspiration and every morning students **RECITE THE YEAR THEY WILL GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE.**

Atkinson principal Stephanie Nutter said, "Everyone in our school believes that **EVERY ATKINSON STUDENT WILL ATTAIN A COLLEGE DEGREE.**"

Atkinson is creating a culture where college is the expectation and students will be academically prepared to succeed.

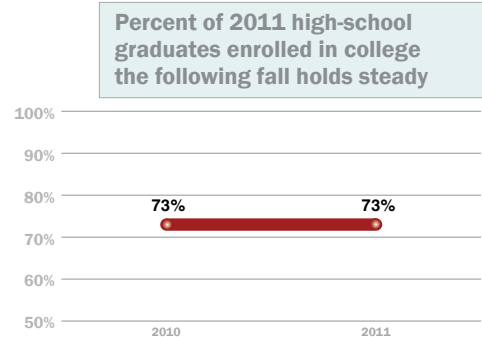
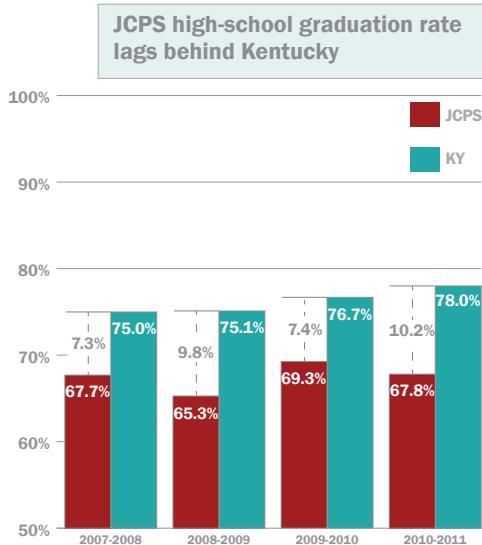
A closer look: Jefferson County's Close the Deal program targets a stronger college-going culture at high schools

Its mission: to provide extra encouragement and support to students at JCPS high schools lacking a strong college-going tradition.

At six key schools, seniors are coached and encouraged by a high-profile team to help them "Close the Deal" on college, including the Mayor, JCPS staff, business leaders, college staff, student mentors and community volunteers. They help raise expectations – and work with students on college entrance and financial aid.

- Almost 2,600 JCPS seniors have participated in Close the Deal since its inception. An additional 1,400 students were involved this year.
- The impact on college affordability is striking. Eighty-six percent of students have applied to post-secondary schools with a total of almost \$16 million in scholarships offered.
- The next challenge: to "Seal the Deal" – and increase college enrollment and success.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.CLOSETHEDEALKY.COM



Objective 2: Use the business community's unique leverage to accelerate attainment

Employers have resources, bargaining power and ability to provide employee support to help reach our goal.

Louisville has over 96,000 working-age residents who have started college – but have yet to complete their degrees – with their top earning years ahead of them.

For 55,000 Degrees, this group's progress is critical. It is our most promising target group to reach our goal by 2020.

For employees, a new degree offers opportunities for personal and family satisfaction – and job promotion.

For employers, it improves the skill sets and capacity of workers and increases employee engagement.

THE GOOD NEWS: COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AMONG LOUISVILLE'S WORKING-AGE AGE ADULTS CONTINUES TO RISE. The numbers **JUMPED BY 1,164** over the past two years – a **4.3 PERCENT INCREASE**.

Where we stand

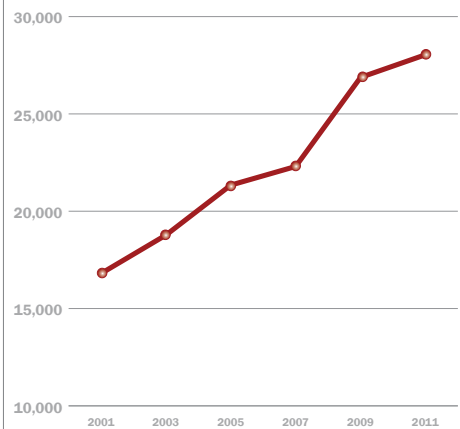
THE GREATER LOUISVILLE INC. DEGREES AT WORK PROGRAM aims to provide leadership and support for working adults to return to college to complete their bachelor's degrees.

ITS GOAL: **3,500** employees will complete their degrees by 2014 – and **15,000** will hit that mark by 2020.

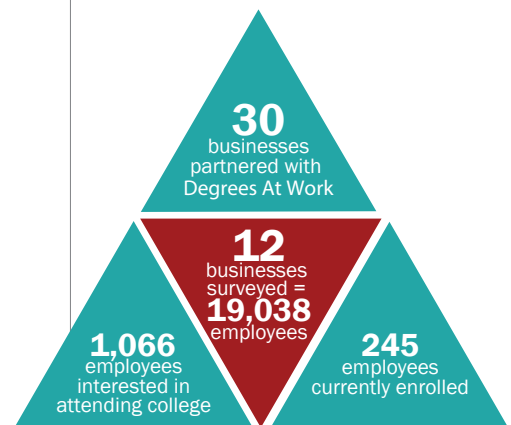
- The number of participating businesses climbed from 16 to **30** over the last year.
- Twelve of the 30 businesses have surveyed their employees and found **MORE THAN 1,000** interested in attending college.
- Currently **245** employees are back at school on their way to degrees.

DEGREES AT WORK HAS IDENTIFIED – AND IS ADDRESSING – KEY BARRIERS to returning to college: uncertainties about cost, time commitment and the academic challenge of college work.

Working-age undergraduate enrollment continues to rise



Business participation in GLI's Degrees At Work



Looking ahead

While Degrees At Work is making progress, **INCREASED COOPERATION FROM LOCAL BUSINESSES WILL GO A LONG WAY** toward helping the program and employees achieve their goals.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.55000DEGREES.ORG/DEGREESATWORK/

A closer look: How one Louisville employer has helped its staff go back to college

As a partner of Degrees At Work, Texas Roadhouse committed to provide support for employees to return to college to complete a college degree.

Texas Roadhouse provides tuition reimbursement of \$2,000 per year. It has surveyed its employees to gauge college interest and has assigned a manager to serve as a College Advocate to provide direct guidance and outreach to those employees interested in higher education. This year, four employees are using their tuition reimbursement program. And over the last five years, 64 employees have taken advantage of that program.

Donna Sanders, the college advocate appointed to help Texas Roadhouse employees, knows how to balance full-time work and full-time school.

Sanders took advantage of the company's tuition reimbursement assistance to complete her bachelor's degree in 2009. She was the first in her family to complete a college degree and she acknowledges the company's incentives as a primary motivation.

Since completing her degree, Donna received a promotion and is now passionate about helping others pursue their educational goals to enhance their career opportunities as well.

Objective 3: Prepare students for success in college, career, citizenship and life

A strong education system prepares students for their next step — from early childhood to adulthood, from school to work lives.

While there are signs of progress, many students emerge from high school without the skills they need for jobs or college.

Where we stand

MORE JCPS STUDENTS WERE JUDGED READY for college and career by the time they graduated from high school, according to school-system test scores — 45 percent, a 14 percentage point increase from 2010. This jump is due in part to greater local and statewide focus on college and career readiness — including new diagnostic interventions.

While the overall improvement is significant, this percentage is still **UNACCEPTABLY LOW**.

School-by-school data continue to show sharp disparities among schools. At some, fewer than 1 in 4 students test as ready, while the majority are judged ready at other schools.

THE GOOD NEWS: These lower-performing schools are already the focus of aggressive improvement plans.

JCPS HAS SET A GOAL OF 66 PERCENT COLLEGE-AND-CAREER READY BY 2015 AND 90 PERCENT FOR 2020.

Another measure of college readiness — placement tests at colleges and universities — shows **MANY STUDENTS NEED REMEDIAL HELP BEFORE THEY CAN BEGIN COLLEGE-LEVEL COURSEWORK**.

EIGHT IN 10 students entering public two-year colleges are not ready.

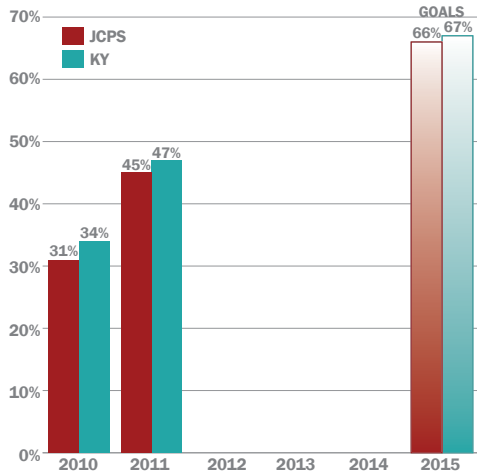
ONE IN 3 who attend public four-year institutions need remedial help.

These **FLAT TREND LINES** are disappointing to educators and frustrating for many students.

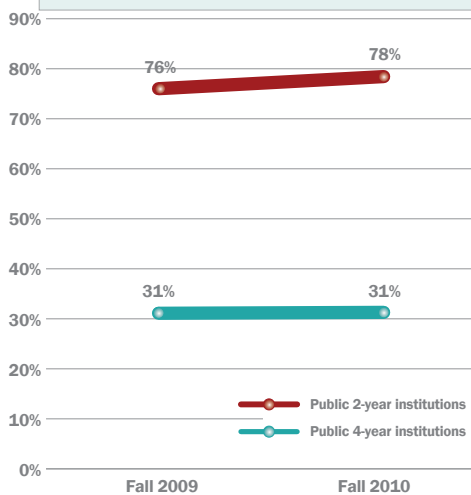
Looking ahead

- Kentucky's drive to align high-school curriculum with college expectations — and to assess student achievement against globally benchmarked common core standards — is expected to have a positive impact.
- Additionally, the increase in students taking Advanced Placement courses in high school prepares them for success in college.

Percent of public high-school seniors meeting state benchmarks for college- and career-readiness



Percent of first-year entering college students needing remedial course work



A closer look: New coordinating council aims to strengthen out-of-school programs

The Louisville Out-of-School Time Coordinating Council is a new community partnership that aims to coordinate and enhance youth services — and ultimately have a substantial impact on student achievement.

The council — founded by Metro United Way, city government, and JCPS — will target at-risk young people who are struggling in school and link them with after-school, weekend and summer programs that increase their odds of staying in school, on grade level and graduating on time.

The council — currently formulating its 10-year plan — aims to establish an online directory of programs, develop shared

measurements and standards, and upgrade KidTrax. The result will be a comprehensive data system that helps schools and programs follow student progress.

Its plans are ambitious: to engage 94 percent of school-age youth — 129,670 students — by 2020.

“We know from experience and from research that strong out-of-school programs and relationships can improve student achievement in school, adding to their academic and social skills, and increasing the odds of their future educational success,” said Joe Tolan, president and CEO of Metro United Way.

Objective 4: Make post-secondary education accessible and affordable

College is a major investment for any family. And the increase in tuition and fees substantially surpassed growth in family income in recent years.

COLLEGE COSTS CAN BE CONFUSING – especially the difference between **STICKER PRICE** – the total cost of tuition, fees and other expenses – and **NET PRICE** or the true out-of-pocket costs after grants and other financial aid.

Where we stand

The average total costs ranged from \$10,833 to \$37,645 per year. With grants and financial aid, the average net price dropped to \$6,517 to \$23,240 per year.

- **FOR-PROFIT SCHOOLS HAD THE HIGHEST NET PRICE.**
- **NOT-FOR-PROFIT PRIVATE SCHOOLS CAME NEXT**, where more substantial institutional aid helped students.
- **PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS CARRIED THE LOWEST AVERAGE COSTS BY FAR.**

BUT NET PRICES FOR STUDENTS HAVE HELD FAIRLY STEADY, AND IN SOME CASES HAVE DROPPED.

At the same time, **STUDENT LOAN DEFAULT RATES CONTINUE TO RISE** – a marker of the financial stresses of college that can linger for years. Nationally, more than 13 percent of students who began repaying their loans in 2009 defaulted within three years.

THE PATTERN IS TRUE LOCALLY AS WELL – AS MANY AS 1 IN 6 STUDENTS AT SOME INSTITUTIONS DEFAULT ON STUDENT LOANS. Students are increasingly failing to pay back their loans due to financial hardship, a lack of understanding, or lack of information about deferment options. Increasing default rates hold back those who hope to re-enroll in college and finish their degree down the road.

MOST LIKELY TO DEFAULT: students at two-year public and for-profit institutions.

LEAST LIKELY TO DEFAULT: students at four-year public and not-for-profit private institutions.

College net price for one year, 2009-2010 academic year

Private for-profit 4-year-or-above institutions



Private for-profit 2-year institutions



Private not-for-profit 4-year or above institutions



Public 4-year-or-above institutions



Public 2-year institutions

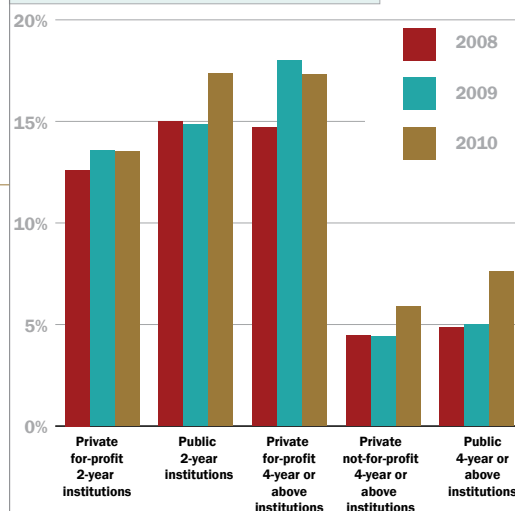


■ Average total cost of attendance
■ Average net price
■ Average grants/scholarships

Change in net price, 2008-2009 to 2009-2010

Institution type	2008-2009 Average Net Price	2009-2010 Average Net Price	Percentage change
Private for-profit 4-year or above institutions	\$23,215	\$23,240	0%
Private for-profit 2-year institutions	\$19,309	\$19,701	2%
Private not-for-profit 4-year or above institutions	\$18,830	\$18,907	0%
Public 4-year or above institutions	\$10,537	\$10,855	3%
Public 2-year institutions	\$8,018	\$6,517	-19%

Student default rates are rising



Looking ahead

- JCPS has stepped up its college advisory support at all 21 high schools with weekly College Access Time – and a clear “college-is-for-all” focus. More than 60 certified counselors, supported by 70-plus college access providers, serve 26,000 students yearly.
- The KentuckianaWorks College Access Center has launched a new website at www.mykcac.org – and remains a source of inspiration and a critical one-stop resource for financial aid as well as college and career counseling services to 4,000 adults and youth in the region each year.

A closer look: A student overcomes financial barriers

MELINDA GARDNER chose to re-enroll in college to pursue a bachelor's degree in nursing at Spalding University when her daughter graduated from high school and was considering college.

Unfortunately, Melinda had defaulted on a previous student loan – so she talked to Spalding's admissions department about how to become eligible for federal financial aid. After six months of on-time student loan payments, she got back on the path to achieving her college goals.



During her first year back in school, she faced some financial setbacks. But again, Spalding was there to help and provided emergency financial funds that covered two months of rent until she was back on her feet. Melinda had a stroke of good fortune in January 2012 when she was the 55,000 Degrees Grab Cash for College winner and took home \$1,000.

Today she is still on track to complete her BSN in May 2014 and is working 40 hours a week to support herself and her family.

Objective 5: Increase educational persistence, performance and progress

Louisville students start college in substantial numbers, but too many drop out after their first or second year.

Persistence matters because the odds of completing a degree go up dramatically if students stay on schedule and do not withdraw. Local post-secondary institutions are embracing strategies to help students persevere to achieve their goals.

Where we stand

COLLEGE GRADUATION RATES HAVE BEEN EDGING UPWARDS.

- At four-year colleges, students are **TWICE AS LIKELY TO GRADUATE** compared to students at two-year colleges.
- Roughly **HALF OF STUDENTS AT FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS GRADUATE** in six years.
- At public two-year institutions, about **1 IN 4 STUDENTS FINISH** in three years.

One important predictor of completion is how many students return for a second year:

- At four-year institutions, **3 OUT OF 4 FULL-TIME STUDENTS** returned for their second year. **PART-TIME STUDENTS MADE SIGNIFICANT GAINS AND INCREASED PERSISTENCE RATES BY 12 PERCENT IN 2010** from the previous year.
- At two-year institutions, roughly **HALF OF FRESHMEN** do not return for their second year – persistence rates have dropped a bit over the past year.

Looking ahead

Colleges are using data to better understand who is dropping out, when and why — and develop programs and interventions to help them persist. Bellarmine's Pioneer Scholars program to help first-generation students is showing promise, as is JCTC's Change Makers and U of L's Cardinal Covenant.

A closer look: Achieving the Dream, a new program at JCTC and Ivy Tech shows promise

Community colleges provide an open door to all students pursuing a college degree.

However, 3 out of 4 students who start do not meet their goal three years later.

Achieving the Dream is a new effort to close achievement gaps and help more community-college students succeed. It has been embraced by both JCTC and Ivy Tech — and they are implementing policies and practices to improve student success.

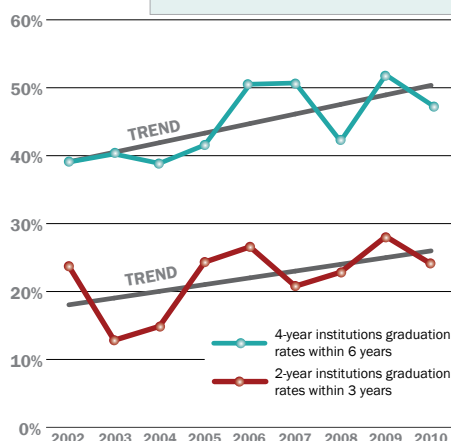
Ivy Tech, in its second year of the program, requires orientation for all new, degree-seeking students — there were 10,000 last fall. Students who need remedial work receive special academic advising and must enroll in a student success course.

JCTC is focusing on developing successful policies and practices to support the students at highest risk of dropping out: male students, minorities, first-time freshmen, and those with low incomes or in need of special help with math.

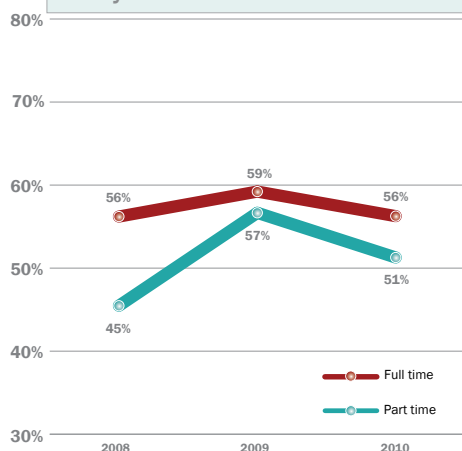
By 2020, JCTC aims to double its number of associate-degree graduates, triple the number of African Americans who earn associate degrees and double the number of successful transfers to four-year universities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.ACHIEVINGTHEDREAM.ORG

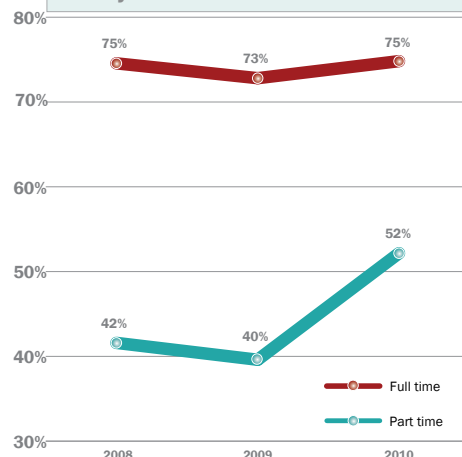
College graduation rates



Persistence, first year to second year, two-year institutions



Persistence, first year to second year, four-year institutions



For 55,000 Degrees to succeed, it takes community support and accountability

Two new campaigns invite the community to be involved.



15K DEGREES INITIATIVE

*Our Education,
Our Community,
Our Goal.*

The African-American community steps up to the challenge

15K is a collaborative of community leaders and organizations committed to mobilizing Louisville's black community to ensure that 15,000 of the 55,000 new degree-holders are African American.

- As 55,000 Degrees got started, Louisville ranked last among its competitor cities in the percentage of African Americans with bachelor's degrees.
- The percent of African Americans with a bachelor's degree increased 3.6 percent from 2009 to 2010, moving from **14.6 TO 18.2 PERCENT**.

MORE THAN 150 CHURCHES AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS have stepped up to actively support the effort. Among them, the Louisville Urban League; the Interdenominational Ministerial Coalition; and the Network Center for Community Change, which has started a "College Closet" housed at Spalding University where students in need can receive school supplies and materials.

Simmons College of Kentucky, in partnership with the University of Louisville and Spalding University, has named **25 STUDENTS "SIMMONS SCHOLARS"** who will receive full-tuition scholarships to earn their bachelor's degrees.

TO LEARN MORE, GO TO 15KDEGREES.ORG.



Here is a new way for organizations, individuals, and students to join the 55,000 Degrees movement

It takes a whole community to embrace a culture change and reach an ambitious goal like 55,000 degrees. So this year we launched a campaign to gain large-scale commitments throughout the community.

- ✓ Many people have signed on as **ADVOCATES**, pledging to increase visibility of 55,000 Degrees and promote college-going and college-completion.
- ✓ Many organizations have signed on as **ALLIES**, pledging to provide high-impact programs in support of the five objectives.
- ✓ Many businesses, churches and organizations have signed on as **PARTNERS**, pledging to ensure a specific number of their employees or members return to college to complete their degrees.

So far, **OVER 450 INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS HAVE SAID, "COUNT ME IN!"** and have made commitments to support 55,000 Degrees.

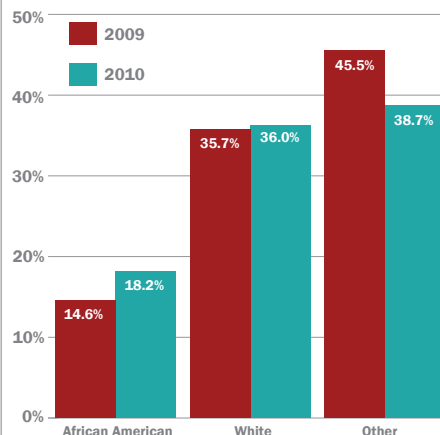
WE WANT TO SEE THIS NUMBER SOAR. WE HOPE MORE EMPLOYERS, COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS EMBRACE THIS CHALLENGE.

Can we count on you? By taking the pledge online, you join this movement and are automatically connected to local education news, events, networks and training.

This report makes clear that we must work even harder to achieve our goal.

GO ONLINE TO: WWW.55000DEGREES.ORG/PLEDGE TO SIGN ON — AND SPREAD THE WORD.

Percentage of working-age population by race with bachelor's degree or higher



FAMILY SCHOLAR
HOUSE

Meet partner No. 1

Family Scholar House, Inc. is changing lives, families and communities through education, with the mission to end the cycle of poverty by giving single-parent students the support they need to **EARN A FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE DEGREE**.

Families enrolled in the program receive educational assistance, supportive housing, mentors, tutors, childcare, transportation and assistance with basic needs. These single-parent college students are empowered to complete their degrees and their **CHILDREN GROW UP WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT THEY WILL GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE** as well.

In April 2012, Family Scholar House was the **FIRST** community organization to say, **"COUNT ME IN!"** and pledge their commitment to advance 55,000 Degrees.

They have **CLAIMED 357 DEGREES** — pledging to ensure at least that many students graduate from college by 2020.

Family Scholar House believes in the mission of 55,000 Degrees and is stepping up to ensure our community reaches our bold goal.

JOIN THEM AND SAY, **"COUNT ME IN!"**

Looking ahead

While this report contains a broad array of data and information, these are our priorities moving forward:

- As we focus on college-going at all age levels, **A TOP STRATEGY MUST BE TO ENGAGE LOUISVILLE'S 96,000 WORKING-AGE ADULTS WITH SOME COLLEGE** – and help them finish up, knowing that a degree will open new doors. To accomplish this, **OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY IS A CRITICAL PARTNER**. We must also pursue strategies for short-term gains to change the education attainment trajectory and to build momentum for community success.
- In today's changing education landscape, **DOLLARS-AND-CENTS QUESTIONS MUST BE CLEARLY ADDRESSED**. The community must understand, **YES, IT DOES PAY TO HAVE A DEGREE** – in higher salaries, job security and better work prospects for our city. And **YES, THE COST OF COLLEGE CAN BE MADE AFFORDABLE** as students find the right educational institution and the financial help they need.
- **FINALLY WE MUST DIG DEEPER** to better understand local dynamics – **BOTH THE APPARENT LOSSES IN PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES AND THE UNCERTAINTIES REVEALED BY THE DATA**.

LET THIS REPORT CREATE A GREATER SENSE OF SHARED URGENCY SO WE CAN ACCELERATE EFFORTS AND BUILD MOMENTUM FORWARD.

Here is a source for more information

The 55,000 Degrees data dashboard is a resource for students and families, educators and interested members of the community.

It offers the opportunity to drill down on community data – with breakdowns by college, school and demographics like race and gender.

Go to www.55000degrees.org and click on “Research Center.”

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PAGE 6: Urban school district data from America's Promise; Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), Graduation Rate Data, 2011, Jefferson County Public Schools, Data Management and Program Evaluation Division; Archdiocese of Louisville, Office of Lifelong Formation and Education; National Student Clearinghouse – Student Tracker, Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA)

PAGE 7: Greater Louisville Inc., Degrees At Work; IPEDS Data Center

PAGE 8: KDE High School Graduates College-Career Readiness Percentage – Report 2011; Indiana University Southeast; Ivy Tech Community College – Southern Indiana; Jefferson Community and Technical College; University of Louisville

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