

A policy brief from Lumina Foundation

A STRONGER NATION THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION



METROPOLITAN AREAS

The path to the Big Goal runs through every city

Increasing college attainment is an urgent national need — a fact that is being acknowledged by policymakers, economists and labor experts at every level. They agree that, in order for the United States to sustain the economic recovery and assure long-term growth and social stability, the nation's educational attainment rate must improve steadily and significantly in coming years. That's why so many experts and organizations have embraced what Lumina Foundation calls the Big Goal, or Goal 2025 — that, by the year 2025, 60 percent of Americans have a high-quality postsecondary credential.

Lumina regularly tracks progress toward Goal 2025 in its signature report, *A Stronger Nation through Higher Education*. Since the first issue of *Stronger Nation* in 2009, we have included data on educational attainment at the national, state and county levels. Almost from the beginning, however, we have been asked for data on higher education attainment levels in cities and metropolitan areas.

While at first we were surprised by these requests, we quickly found that metro-level analysis and use of the data provided some of the most powerful insights about the need to increase college attainment and the strategies for doing so. This should not have been surprising, as metro-level leaders from government, education, business and community organizations have focused for many years on increasing college attainment. They clearly see tremendous value in such strategies as aligning K-12 and higher education, expanding higher education opportunity for underrepresented groups, and linking higher education to workforce development.

In short, metro-level leaders have been some of the most passionate early adopters of the *Stronger Nation* reports. That is also why, for the first time, the most recent issue of *Stronger Nation* (March 2012) provides data that will help cities and metro regions understand where they stand educationally and develop strategies to drive educational attainment. This policy brief is excerpted from that report, which is available online in several formats, including

a mobile application for iPhone and iPad. (Visit www.luminafoundation.org/stronger_nation.)

Clearly, the data show that cities and metro regions *must* be prime locations for action in the drive to increase college attainment. According to 2010 Census figures, the nation's 20 most populous metropolitan areas encompass 37.4 percent of the U.S. population. Expand that area to include the nation's top 100 metro areas, and you'll find two of every three Americans (66 percent). And with demographic trends showing that American society is becoming increasingly

urban, it is obvious that the nation must find effective strategies to increase college attainment in metro regions.

What's more, we at Lumina believe these areas are fertile ground for growing the kind of collaborations among political, business, education, philanthropic

and community-based leaders that can have significant impact on college attainment. That is why we are focusing more of our attention on large-scale change in metropolitan regions.

We are already supporting such efforts in more than 20 metro areas — to help adults return to higher education, to increase college access and success among members of fast-growing Latino populations, and to give all underserved populations the chance to succeed individually and contribute collectively to the success of their cities. We are finding eager partners — organizations and individuals who understand that creating an educated workforce is nothing less than a survival strategy for a city and who recognize that a well-educated person more actively embraces his or her role as a contributing citizen.

In short, a regional or metropolitan strategy taps a strong motivation and sense of urgency among its residents for the change that is necessary to achieve Goal 2025 and secure the future of the country as a whole. But it all starts with understanding where you are (knowing your region's data) and setting a goal for where you need to be. We hope these analyses put more cities and metro regions on that strategic path.



Percentage of adults (25-64) with at least an associate degree, by metropolitan area

	Percent with at least an associate degree	Total Population 2010	Population Rank 2010		Percent with at least an associate degree	Total Population 2010	Population Rank 2010
Akron, OH	39.93	703,200	73	Madison, WI	53.74	568,593	90
Albany-Schenectady-Troy, NY	48.94	870,716	59	McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX	20.78	774,769	69
Albuquerque, NM	37.68	887,077	58	Memphis, TN-MS-AR	33.28	1,316,100	42
Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA-NJ	38.76	821,173	65	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL	39.65	5,564,635	8
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA	43.39	5,268,860	9	Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI	42.09	1,555,908	40
Augusta-Richmond County, GA-SC	32.58	556,877	93	Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	50.06	3,279,833	16
Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos, TX	46.97	1,716,289	36	Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin, TN	39.06	1,589,934	39
Bakersfield-Delano, CA	21.33	839,631	63	New Haven-Milford, CT	42.99	862,477	61
Baltimore-Towson, MD	43.90	2,710,489	20	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, LA	33.70	1,167,764	47
Baton Rouge, LA	31.65	802,484	66	New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA	45.88	18,897,109	1
Birmingham-Hoover, AL	36.92	1,128,047	50	North Port-Bradenton-Sarasota, FL	36.47	702,281	74
Boise City-Nampa, ID	37.85	616,561	87	Ogden-Clearfield, UT	40.09	547,184	95
Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH	54.01	4,552,402	10	Oklahoma City, OK	35.19	1,252,987	45
Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk, CT	53.29	916,829	57	Omaha-Council Bluffs, NE-IA	43.82	865,350	60
Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY	44.14	1,135,509	48	Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL	39.55	2,134,411	27
Cape Coral-Fort Myers, FL	32.46	618,754	86	Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura, CA	40.11	823,318	64
Charleston-North Charleston-Summerville, SC	40.75	664,607	80	Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville, FL	39.37	543,376	96
Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC	43.16	1,758,038	34	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	42.65	5,965,343	5
Chattanooga, TN-GA	32.34	528,143	98	Phoenix-Mesa-Glendale, AZ	37.30	4,192,887	14
Chicago-Joliet-Naperville, IL-IN-WI	43.59	9,461,105	3	Pittsburgh, PA	43.56	2,356,285	23
Cincinnati-Middletown, OH-KY-IN	39.37	2,130,151	28	Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA	43.82	2,226,009	24
Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH	38.65	2,077,240	29	Poughkeepsie-Newburgh-Middletown, NY	42.77	670,301	79
Colorado Springs, CO	46.38	645,613	83	Providence-New Bedford-Fall River, RI-MA	40.28	1,600,852	38
Columbia, SC	40.59	767,598	71	Provo-Orem, UT	46.97	526,810	99
Columbus, OH	42.83	1,836,536	33	Raleigh-Cary, NC	52.72	1,130,490	49
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	38.66	6,371,773	4	Richmond, VA	39.61	1,258,251	44
Dayton, OH	36.67	841,502	62	Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	27.54	4,224,851	13
Denver-Aurora-Broomfield, CO	47.39	2,543,482	21	Rochester, NY	46.90	1,054,323	52
Des Moines-West Des Moines, IA	46.86	569,633	89	Sacramento-Arden-Arcade-Roseville, CA	40.65	2,149,127	25
Detroit-Warren-Livonia, MI	37.86	4,296,250	12	Salt Lake City, UT	39.64	1,124,197	51
El Paso, TX	28.05	800,647	67	San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX	33.88	2,142,508	26
Fresno, CA	28.71	930,450	56	San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, CA	43.95	3,095,313	17
Grand Rapids-Wyoming, MI	37.62	774,160	70	San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA	52.91	4,335,391	11
Greensboro-High Point, NC	35.30	723,801	72	San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	54.08	1,836,911	32
Greenville-Mauldin-Easley, SC	38.58	636,986	84	San Juan-Caguas-Guaynabo, PR	36.92	2,478,905	22
Harrisburg-Carlisle, PA	39.68	549,475	94	Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA	34.50	563,631	92
Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, CT	46.28	1,212,381	46	Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA	47.97	3,439,809	15
Honolulu, HI	44.50	953,207	54	Springfield, MA	41.17	692,942	77
Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX	35.25	5,946,800	6	St. Louis, MO-IL	41.15	2,812,896	18
Indianapolis-Carmel, IN	41.00	1,756,241	35	Stockton, CA	26.11	685,306	78
Jackson, MS	38.78	539,057	97	Syracuse, NY	43.53	662,577	81
Jacksonville, FL	36.50	1,345,596	41	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	37.56	2,783,243	19
Kansas City, MO-KS	42.52	2,035,334	30	Toledo, OH	34.82	651,429	82
Knoxville, TN	38.86	698,030	76	Tucson, AZ	37.77	980,263	53
Lakeland-Winter Haven, FL	27.57	602,095	88	Tulsa, OK	35.55	937,478	55
Lancaster, PA	32.21	519,445	100	Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC	38.20	1,671,683	37
Las Vegas-Paradise, NV	29.67	1,951,269	31	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	54.37	5,582,170	7
Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	35.18	699,757	75	Wichita, KS	36.58	623,061	85
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA	38.96	12,828,837	2	Worcester, MA	46.32	798,552	68
Louisville-Jefferson County, KY-IN	34.85	1,283,566	43	Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA	28.71	565,773	91

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census and 2008-10 American Community Survey Three-Year Estimates.

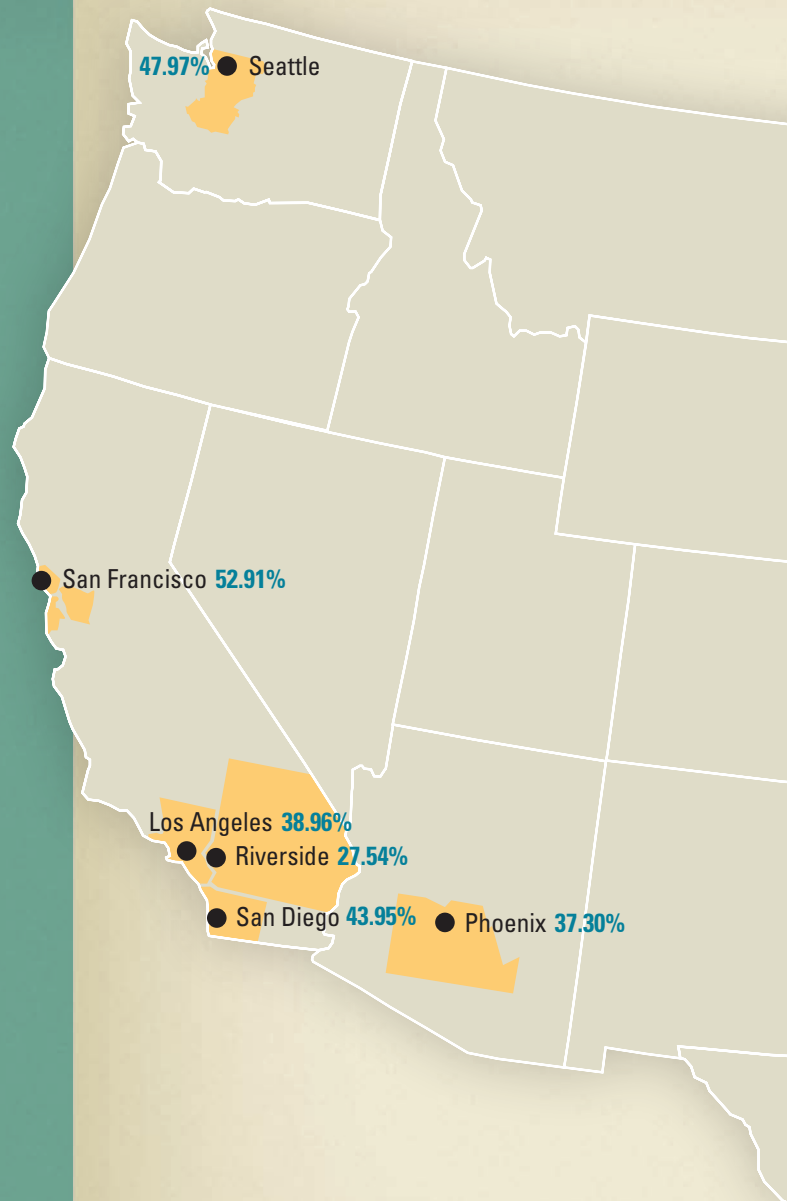
Note: This chart lists Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). The term MSA refers to a large population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of social and economic integration with that core. MSAs comprise one or more entire counties, except in New England, where cities and towns are the basic geographic units. The federal Office of Management and Budget defines MSAs for purposes of collecting, tabulating and publishing federal data. These definitions result from applying published standards to Census Bureau data.

Rank by population

1	New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island	18.9 million
2	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana	12.8 million
3	Chicago-Joliet-Naperville	9.5 million
4	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	6.4 million
5	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington	6.0 million
6	Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown	5.9 million
7	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria	5.6 million
8	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach	5.6 million
9	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta	5.3 million
10	Boston-Cambridge-Quincy	4.6 million
11	San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont	4.3 million
12	Detroit-Warren-Livonia	4.3 million
13	Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario	4.2 million
14	Phoenix-Mesa-Glendale	4.2 million
15	Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue	3.4 million
16	Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington	3.3 million
17	San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos	3.1 million
18	St. Louis	2.8 million
19	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater	2.8 million
20	Baltimore-Towson	2.7 million

Rank by degree attainment

1	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria	54.37%
2	Boston-Cambridge-Quincy	54.01%
3	San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont	52.91%
4	Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington	50.06%
5	Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue	47.97%
6	New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island	45.88%
7	San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos	43.95%
8	Baltimore-Towson	43.90%
9	Chicago-Joliet-Naperville	43.59%
10	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta	43.39%
11	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington	42.65%
12	St. Louis	41.15%
13	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach	39.65%
14	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana	38.96%
15	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	38.66%
16	Detroit-Warren-Livonia	37.86%
17	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater	37.56%
18	Phoenix-Mesa-Glendale	37.30%
19	Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown	35.25%
20	Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario	27.54%



Attainment rates for the nation's 20 most populous metropolitan areas



Note: This map denotes Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). The term MSA refers to a large population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of social and economic integration with that core. MSAs comprise one or more entire counties, except in New England, where cities and towns are the basic geographic units. The federal Office of Management and Budget defines MSAs for purposes of collecting, tabulating and publishing federal data. These definitions result from applying published standards to Census Bureau data.



Lumina Foundation, an Indianapolis-based private foundation, is committed to enrolling and graduating more students from college — especially 21st century students: low-income students, students of color, first-generation students and adult learners. Lumina’s goal is to increase the proportion of Americans who hold high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by 2025. Lumina pursues this goal in three ways: by identifying and supporting effective practice, through public policy advocacy, and by using our communications and convening power to build public will for change.