

# Four-Year Degrees: Meeting Washington's Demand for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jobs



## Washington needs increased degree attainment to meet the needs of the economy.

While Washington state enjoys one of the most robust economies in the country, jobs often go to those from outside the state. According to the Washington Roundtable there will be 740,000 unfilled jobs over the next 5 years. Washington ranks second for the number of college graduates imported from out of state<sup>1</sup> and ranks 45th in the nation for participation in higher education<sup>2</sup>.

## A diverse set of educational pathways is the hallmark of higher education in Washington.

Washington students and their families enjoy options tailored to fit their needs including degrees and certificates at all levels. This includes one of the best and most collaborative transfer systems in the nation.

### Benefits of a College Degree:

- Higher average salaries
- Lower unemployment rates
- Better health outcomes
- Reduced reliance on social services
- Increased voting and civic participation

### Bachelor Degree Skills Employers Look for:

- 80% sought leadership skills
- 79% sought ability to work in a team
- 70% sought communication skills (written)
- 70% sought problem-solving skills
- 69% sought communication skills (verbal)

- One third of all jobs in Washington state will require a bachelor's degree or greater by 2020<sup>3</sup>.
- Washington ranks 42<sup>nd</sup> in the nation for bachelor's degrees, with 4.5 bachelor's degrees for every 1000 residents<sup>4</sup>.

## **Don't Leave Washingtonians Behind**

1. **Continue investing** in the full spectrum of higher education pathways. This includes investments in additional bachelors, graduate, and professional degrees as well as targeted investments in STEM and high demand degrees.
2. **Increase funding for the State Need Grant and State Work Study programs**, allowing our colleges and universities to serve more Washington residents and deliver a more diverse workforce.

<sup>1</sup> Seattle Business Magazine: <http://www.seattlebusinessmag.com/blog/washington-ranks-second-importing-college-graduates>

<sup>2</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, 2014: [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15\\_302.65.asp?current=yes](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_302.65.asp?current=yes)

<sup>3</sup> Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce: [https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/StateProjections\\_6.1.15\\_agc\\_v2.pdf](https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/StateProjections_6.1.15_agc_v2.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, 2014: [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15\\_319.30.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_319.30.asp)