

My Degree Matters Colorado

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

The more educated a city's population, the more robust its economy will be. In fact, in his speech to a joint session of Congress, President Obama put the issue of talent squarely on the federal agenda when he said, "The... challenge we must address is the urgent need to expand the promise of education in America. In a global economy where the most valuable skill you can sell is your knowledge, a good education is no longer just a pathway to opportunity – it is a pre-requisite."

"We know that educational attainment is the biggest predictor of success for cities and metro areas today. The research is unassailable." *President Obama*

More industries demand a workforce with specialized skills, knowledge and training for jobs in 21st century global economy. Nationally, increasing educational attainment by one percentage point in each of the 57 largest metropolitan areas would be associated with an increase in per capita income of \$124 billion. For Denver alone, a one percentage point increase would mean a \$1.8 billion increase in per capita income. *Source: CEO's for Cities*

WHY HERE

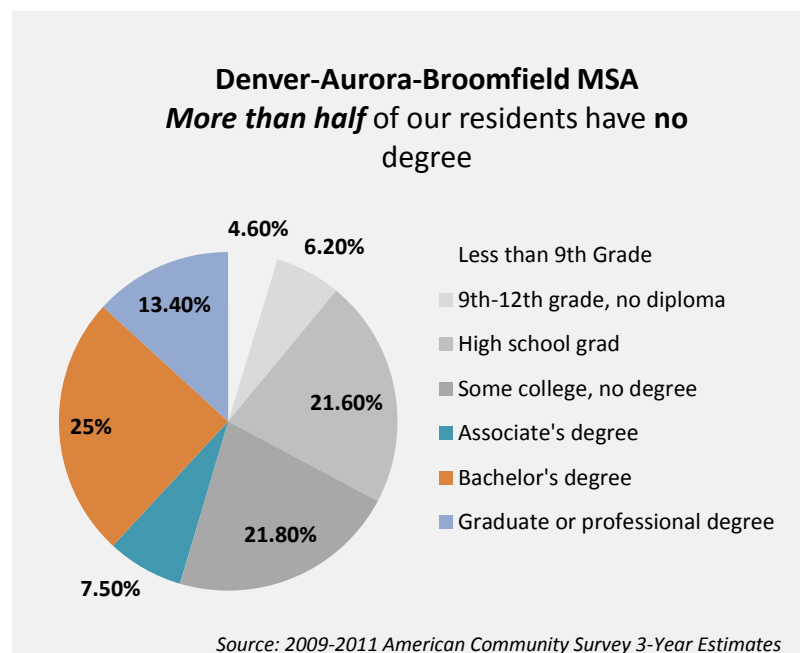
The Denver-Aurora-Broomfield (DAB) Metropolitan Service Area (MSA) is the largest in the state and comprises the following counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Elbert, Gilpin, Jefferson, and Park. Within that area, there are nine public institutions of higher education, six private, nonprofit institutions and nearly 40 private, for-profit schools.

According to the most recent census, over 2.5 million people reside in the DAB MSA, and more than half of all Colorado's adults aged 25 and older reside in this area- but only 9% were currently enrolled in college in 2009. Eighty-nine percent of that population has a high school diploma or higher, yet only 38% hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Nearly 22% have some college credit, but have not attained a degree or certified credential of any kind.

WHY NOW

The *Talent Dividend Prize* is a \$1 million prize to be awarded to the MSA exhibiting the greatest increase in the number of postsecondary degrees granted per one thousand people over a four-year period. This \$1 million prize will be used to launch a national promotional campaign centered on talent development for the winning MSA.

My Degree Matters Colorado will be focused on leveraging existing best practices that are integrated into cities' already existing strategic directions with an overall goal to increase degree completion by 1% (or 16,000 additional degrees) by 2014.



Count Me In!

Let's use what's already in place to get the job done.

Employers

- ✓ Offer or expand the use of tuition assistance (including prior learning assessments)
- ✓ Know which employees are close to degree completion; encourage them to complete
- ✓ Introduce your employees to Prior Learning Assessment (Learning Counts.org is one example) as a way to accelerate degree completion
- ✓ Link degree completion to your business goals and employee promotions
- ✓ Encourage your partners to become involved with My Degree Matters Colorado through sharing resources, or support services
- ✓ Pass along your success stories- your employees are an inspiration not just to your company, but to all students returning for their degrees!

Colleges and Universities

- ✓ Know who has attended your school and left; contact those students and invite them back
- ✓ Take advantage of new laws in Colorado: Reverse Transfer toward degree completion and Academic Credit for a student's prior learning. (Senate Bill 12-045 and House Bill 12-1072)
- ✓ Support returning veterans as they come to your school
- ✓ Foster dual credit initiatives with high school students

Non-profit Community Organizations and Centers

- ✓ Become familiar with the many educational support resources available in your area
- ✓ Identify an education "expert" within your organization, the go-to advocate for returning to college

Government Officials

- ✓ Include workforce education and degrees as part of your long-term economic development strategy
- ✓ Support new laws in Colorado: Reverse Transfer toward degree completion and Academic Credit for a student's prior learning (Senate Bill 12-045 and House Bill 12-1072)
- ✓ Leverage your communications channels for My Degree Matters Colorado- the more people who know about our programs, the greater number of degrees completed
- ✓ Promote ***My Degree Matters Colorado***. When one of us attains a degree, ***we all succeed***.

Individual Community Members

- ✓ Know someone who wants to return to college? Consider ride sharing or offer to babysit.
- ✓ Encourage family, neighbors and friends to consider finishing their degrees.
- ✓ **We all win in the long run.**

Check us out online! www.MyDegreeMattersCO.org

My Degree Matters Colorado partners

Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Aurora Mayor, Steve Hogan, Accellent, Accenture, Better Business Bureau, City and County of Broomfield, Broomfield Business Resource Center, Broomfield Chamber of Commerce, *CAEL, Center for Work Education and Employment, College America, College In Colorado, College Invest, College Summit, Colorado Christian University, Colorado Community College System, Colorado Department of Higher Education, Colorado State Governor's Office, Colorado Technical University, Colorado State University, CSU Global Campus, CSU OnlinePlus, Colorado Succeeds, Colorado Trust, Columbia College, Community College of Aurora, Community College of Denver, Denver Foundation, Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce, Denver Scholarship Foundation, DeVry University, Downtown Denver Partnership, Education Opportunity Center, Councilman Christopher Herndon, District 11 of Denver, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Kaiser Permanente, Leadership Science Institute, LLC., LEARN, Linhart PR, Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation, Metropolitan State University of Denver, Miles Above Strategies, Mountain States Employers Council, Office of the Lt. Governor, State of Colorado, Red Rocks Community College, Regis University, University College, University of Denver, University of Colorado, University of Colorado at Denver, University of Phoenix