

FINAL REPORT

Findings From The National Education and Employment Survey: Wave 1 and Wave 2

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Executive Summary

The National Education and Employment Survey

The purpose of the National Education and Employment Survey (NEES) discussed in this report was to determine the percentage of adults in America who hold a “high-quality” postsecondary certificate, license, or certification as their highest credential, where “high-quality” was defined by whether the holder of the postsecondary credential was working in a related field.¹ Two waves of data collection were undertaken in 2016—Wave 1 was conducted in January-February 2016 and Wave 2 was conducted in October-November 2016. The total sample size for Wave 1 was 9,539 and the total number of completed surveys was 1,890. The total sample size for Wave 2 was 4,935 and the total number of completes was 1,998. In both waves, we oversampled African Americans and Hispanics. The analyses reported here are based on the combined data (3,888 completes), weighted to represent the survey population.

Overall, the age range of the survey population was between 25 and 64 years old. About 17 percent of the population identified themselves as of Hispanic origin and 14 percent were African American. The population was evenly divided between male and female. In terms of educational attainment, about two-thirds of the survey population had a sub-baccalaureate education while 56 percent had no degrees. About two-thirds (64 percent) of the population was employed and over half (54 percent) were employed full-time. Close to 30 percent (28 percent) were not working and not looking for work. Among those employed full-time, the median income range was between \$40,001 and \$50,000, and one-quarter earned more than \$75,000. Only about 10 percent reported earning \$20,000 or less.

Limitations of the Analysis

The data reported here are simple weighted cross-tabulations. We note differences between groups that might be of interest but it should be emphasized that no significance tests were run on these differences to see if they were statistically significant. In addition, our findings simply represent correlations, not causative differences. Overall, this is a descriptive report, providing a look at the prevalence of postsecondary credentials and employment-related outcomes, based on two rounds of data collected in 2016.

¹ We use the term “high-value”—a term that other studies have used to indicate value in the labor market—interchangeably with “high-quality” in this report.

Findings

The findings are organized around several themes related to the research questions underlying the study: (a) prevalence of different types of work-related credentials in the adult, working-age population; (b) prevalence of high-value credentials defined as those that lead to or are associated with employment in a related field; (c) reported usefulness of the work-related credential with respect to employment outcomes (getting and keeping a job, improving work skills, increasing pay, keeping them marketable to employers and clients); and (d) earnings of full-time workers with and without high-value credentials. The summary first presents findings for the adult, working-age population with respect to these four topics and then presents parallel findings for the non-degreed population-- a group for whom obtaining a work-related credential might be of particular importance in terms of access to better and potentially higher-paying jobs.

Prevalence of Professional Certifications/State or Industry Licenses, Postsecondary Certificates, and Work Experience Programs

About one-quarter of the survey population had a currently active professional certification or state or industry license. A little under one-fifth (19 percent) had earned a postsecondary certificate. Another 27 percent reported that they had completed a work experience program.

There was little difference in the percentage of certification/license holders by race, ethnicity, or gender. Hispanics were somewhat more likely than non-Hispanics to earn postsecondary certificates (22 percent versus 19 percent) and African Americans were much more likely to earn postsecondary certificates compared with whites (29 percent versus 18 percent). There were no differences by race and ethnicity among those who had completed a work experience program. However, while just under a third (31 percent) of women in the survey population reported having completed a work experience program, this was true of only 23 percent of men.

High-Value Credentials

We define a high-value credential as one that leads to or is associated with employment in a related field. We addressed the issue of high-value credentials in two ways. First, we examined those with a credential who reported that they were currently working to see who reported working in a field that was somewhat or very related to the credential. This provides an initial estimate of high-value credentials among those currently employed. We then examined differences among those currently employed in the percentages having high-value credentials by race/ethnicity and gender. This seemed a more meaningful comparison as it looked only at those currently employed.

Second, in order to get an estimate for the overall survey population, we needed to account for individuals who had the credential but who were not currently working, individuals who did not have the credential, and individuals who did not respond to the questions about having the credential or about the relatedness of the credential to their job. To get the most conservative estimate, we treated the last group as not having the credential. Accounting for all these groups allows us to estimate the percentage of the overall survey population who held high-value credentials.

Among those currently working who held a professional certification/license, 80 percent were working in a related field. There was little difference in terms of race or ethnicity in the proportion that had high-value certifications/licenses. Women were somewhat more likely than men to be working in a field related to the certification/license (84 percent versus 77 percent).

About 53 percent of those with a postsecondary certificate were working in fields somewhat or very related to the postsecondary certificate. The percentage of Hispanics who were working in a related field tended to be somewhat higher than the percentage of non-Hispanics (57 percent versus 52 percent) while the reverse was true of African Americans compared to whites (49 percent versus 53 percent). There was no difference in the percentage holding high-value postsecondary certificates by gender.

A little under two-thirds (64 percent) of those who had completed a work experience program were currently working in a related field. Among those currently employed, there was little difference in the percentage that had completed a high-value work experience program by race or ethnicity. However, a higher percentage of men than women were working in a field related to their work experience program (68 percent versus 61 percent).

Overall, among the survey population, 18 percent held high-value professional certifications/industry licenses, 8 percent had earned high-value postsecondary certificates, and 15 percent had completed a high-value work experience program—credentials that enabled them to work directly or indirectly in related fields.

Reported Usefulness of the Work-Related Credential with Respect to Employment Outcomes

Not surprisingly, respondents with work-related credentials working in a related field rated the credential much more highly in terms of usefulness with respect to various employment-related outcomes (such as getting and keeping a job, improving work skills, keeping them marketable to employers or clients). However, even those working out of field tended to value the credential in getting a job, keeping them marketable to employers or clients, or improving work skills. However, as one would expect, we see

some large differences in the reported usefulness of the program in terms of increasing pay between those working in a related field and their counterparts working out of field.

We also examined differences in perceived usefulness of certification and licenses among current holders by ethnicity, race, and gender among those holding high-value certifications/licenses. Overall, with some exceptions, Hispanics, African Americans, and women holding high-value credentials tended to rate the certification/license somewhat more highly in terms of the workplace (getting a job, keeping a job, keeping you marketable to employers or clients, improving work skills) than their counterparts. However, women were somewhat less sanguine than men in their perceptions of the usefulness of the work experience program, particularly with regard to effect on pay. For example, only 42 percent of women rated the program as “very useful” in increasing pay compared with 54 percent of men.

Earnings of Full-Time Workers with and without High-Value Credentials

In general, among full-time workers, working in a related field was clearly associated with higher income compared with either those who were working out of field or those who did possess work-related credentials. The differences were more pronounced at the tail ends of the income distribution. For example, 45 percent of those with a certification/license working in field earned more than \$60,000 compared with 34-36 percent of those without a certification/license and those working out of field. In terms of work experience programs, even simply having the credential appeared to be associated with somewhat higher income, particularly at the lower end of the distribution. For example, the median income range for those who had not completed a work experience program was \$40,001-\$50,000 compared with \$50,001-60,000 for those who had completed such a program, regardless of whether they were working in a related field.

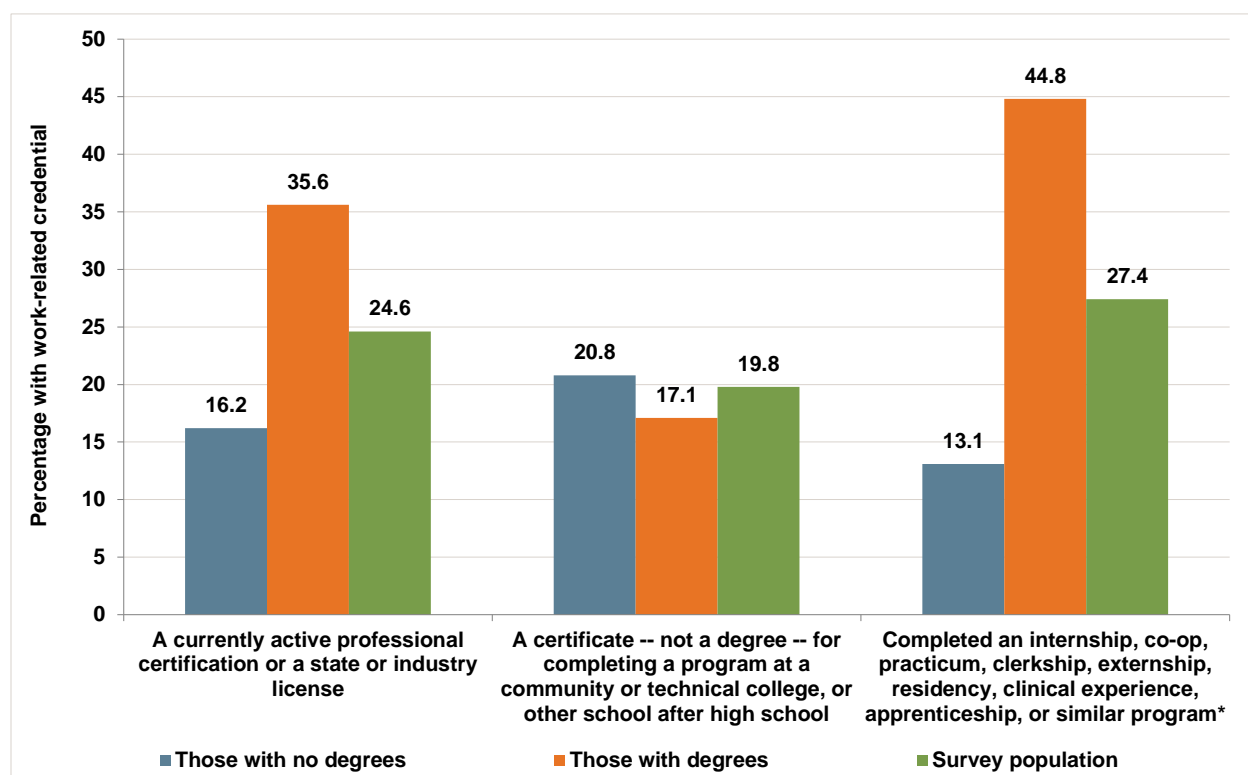
The Non-Degreed Survey Population: Characteristics and Experiences

Fifty-six percent of the survey population did not have degrees. A higher percentage of Hispanics than non-Hispanics did not have degrees: 66 percent versus 54 percent. This was true of African Americans as well compared to whites (63 percent versus 54 percent). In terms of employment status, less than half (43 percent) of those with no degrees were employed full-time.

Figure S.1 shows the prevalence of work-related credentials in different groups—those with no degrees, those with degrees, and the general survey population. Compared with those with degrees, those with no degrees were much less likely to have either a professional certification/industry license or to have completed a work experience program (36 percent versus 16 percent and 45 percent versus 13 percent

respectively for the two credentials). However, the percentage that had earned a postsecondary certificate was actually higher in the group with no degrees than their degreed counterparts (21 percent versus 17 percent).

Figure S.1: Prevalence of work-related credentials among those with no degrees, those with degrees, and the survey population

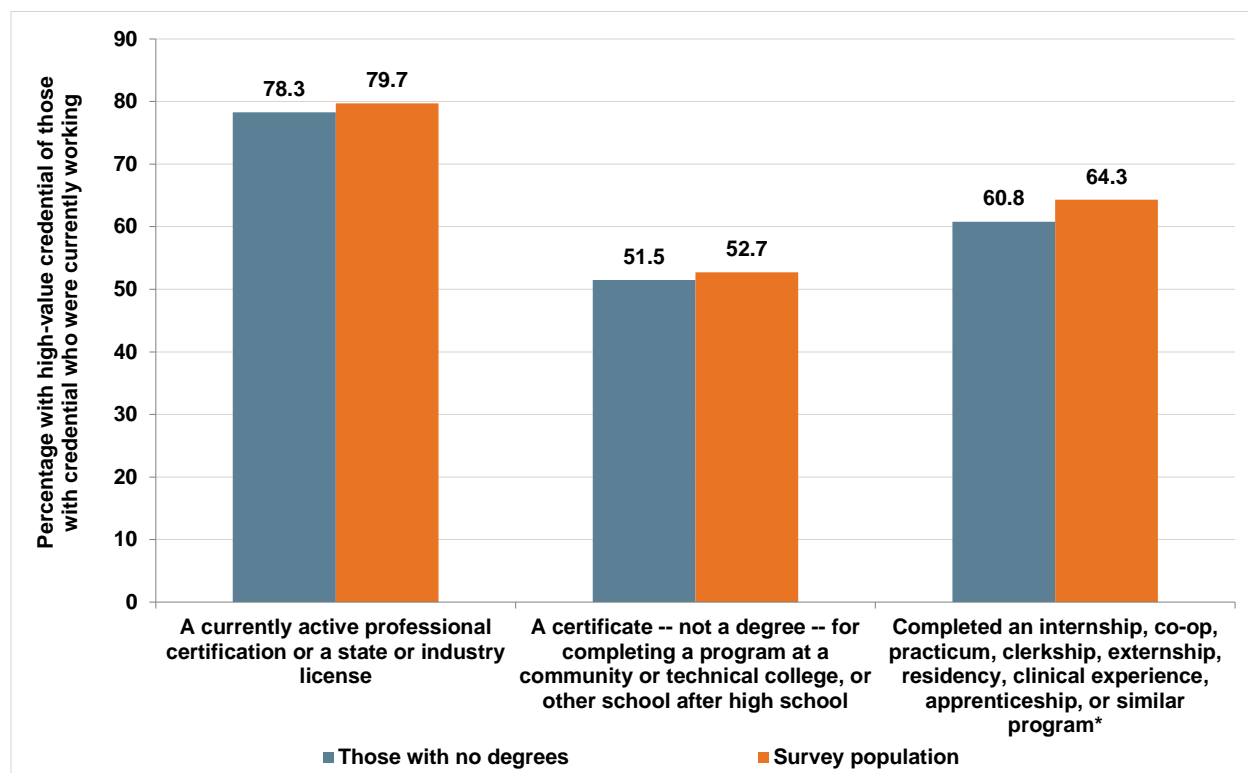


Note: *A small percentage (typically less than four percent) who reported they were currently in a work experience program were excluded from the graph.

As Figure S.2 shows, among individuals with no degrees who had work-related credentials *and were currently working*, the percentages with high-value credentials for the three types of credentials were quite high and close to those in the overall population (78 percent versus 80 percent; 52-53 percent; and 61 percent versus 64 percent for the three types of work-related credentials, respectively).

In the overall group with no degrees, with the exception of postsecondary certificates, the proportion holding high-value credentials was lower than in the survey population. For example, while 18 percent of the survey population held high-value professional certifications/industry licenses and 15 percent had completed a high-value work experience program and were working in related fields, this was true of only 11 percent and 6 percent respectively of those with no degrees. With respect to postsecondary certificates, 8 percent of both the survey population and those with no degrees had earned high-value credentials and were working in related fields.

Figure S.2: Percentage with high-value work-related credentials among those with no degrees and the survey population who had the credential and were currently working



Note: *A small percentage (typically less than four percent) who reported they were currently in a work experience program were excluded from the graph.

Like the general population of credential holders, those working in field rated the credential much more highly than those working out of field in terms of employment-related outcomes. Like the general population of credential holders, somewhat lower percentages rated either the postsecondary certificate or the work experience program as “very useful” in increasing their pay than on other dimensions related to the job.

As with the general population, compared with those who did not have work-related credentials or were working out of field, having a high-value work-related credential was associated with markedly higher incomes. For example, 16 percent of those without a certification/license reported incomes of over \$60,000 compared with over 30 percent of those possessing a high-value credential. Similarly, 31 percent of those working in field earned over \$60,000, compared with 17 percent of those without a certificate and only 7 percent of those with a certificate working out of field.

Percentage of the Survey Population that did not have a Degree but had earned a High-Value Postsecondary Certificate

The Lumina Foundation is currently focusing on postsecondary certificates. We estimated that the weighted percentage of individuals without a degree who hold a high-value postsecondary certificate represented approximately 4.3 percent of the survey population.

Final Thoughts

Overall, it appears that technical training and education offers high value to participants in that it enables a substantial number of credential holders to work in related fields directly or indirectly and this seems to be associated with higher earnings. African Americans, in particular, appear to seek out these credentials to a higher degree than their counterparts. Working in related fields appears to be positively related to earnings, providing a gateway to middle-income jobs.

Directions for Future Research

Given Lumina's interest in the non-degreed population, we offer three directions for future research:

- **Focus Groups and Surveys Focused on the Non-Degreed Population:** The next phase of the study should focus on this group in particular. Lumina can still leverage the ATES survey that the federal government plans to field to get a national estimate. Interviews and focus groups with individuals would help us understand the barriers and challenges faced by this group in terms of obtaining the credential and in getting jobs in related fields where they could take advantage of the credential and training. A set of interviews with programs offering these work-related credentials could help identify components of programs that better position the credential holder to succeed. Data from these interviews could help inform future survey questions and responses, as well as help Lumina design effective interventions to remove barriers if they exist (e.g., promote better counseling and advising). In addition, a more focused survey with a larger sample would allow us to address more directly questions regarding employment outcomes. For example, it is likely that there are industry differences in the extent to which respondents work in a job related to their field, but the current study did not have sufficient sample sizes with which to examine these differences.
- **A Longitudinal Study:** A longitudinal study would allow us to make stronger inferences about the value of a credential/degree. For example, we could follow multiple cohorts of 18 year olds over time, and compare/contrast the outcomes of those who eventually obtain a high-value credential versus those who do not. Because this would be a longitudinal survey, we will not have to rely on retrospective perceptions as to whether the credential helped them to get a job or not.

- Leveraging Existing Data: Related to the point above, we could leverage existing longitudinal surveys (Education Longitudinal Study, National Education Longitudinal Study, National Longitudinal Survey of Youth) to address some of the questions above, although we also recognize there may be differences in the population demographics compared with today's environment (e.g., in the past, there were fewer Hispanics). But these datasets have the advantage of having a rich set of variables, including achievement/cognitive data, and we can use that data to conduct a matched-sample analysis that (i.e., propensity analysis) that would allow us to better understand the value of a credential. In addition, these datasets include a wide range of psychosocial variables that would allow us to predict the characteristics of respondents who eventually do and do not obtain a credential.

1. Introduction

Rationale for Study

The Lumina Foundation—through Goal 2025—is committed to improving the nation’s postsecondary education system by increasing the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees, certificates, and other credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025.² Ensuring access to higher-education opportunities after high school would enable more individuals to ultimately achieve a greater earning capacity, which in turn leads to better quality of life, stronger economies, and thriving communities, as well as a stronger nation overall. Recent studies have emphasized the importance of postsecondary education and training as gateways to the middle class.³

As we noted in our last report, there are little systematic data on the prevalence of non-degree-based educational/work-related credentials such as certifications, licenses, and certificates and their impact on employment outcomes. Formed to address this shortcoming, a federal interagency working group, the Interagency Working Group on Expanded Measures of Enrollment and Attainment (GEMEnA), developed and fielded the Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES) Pilot Study, a national household survey of non-institutionalized adults ages 18 and over, conducted during September 2010 and January 2011.⁴

The National Education and Employment Survey (NEES)

To obtain data for Lumina’s 2016 Stronger Nation Report, with NCES’s approval, the Lumina Foundation (Lumina) asked NORC at the University of Chicago (NORC) to conduct a national survey of adults titled the National Education and Employment Survey (NEES). The purpose of the NEES was to determine the percentage of adults in America who hold a “high-quality” certificate, license, or

² <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/file/2013-lumina-strategic-plan.pdf>.

³ Carnevale, A., Rose, S., and Hanson, A. (2012). *Certificates: Gateway to gainful employment and college degrees*. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce; Carnevale, A., Jayasundera, T., and Hanson, A. R. (2012). *Career and technical education: Five ways that pay*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce; Carnevale, A., Smith, N., and Strohl, J. (2013). *Recovery: Job growth and education requirements through 2020*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce.

⁴ Bielick, S., Cronen, S., Stone, C., Montaquila, J., Roth, S.B., and Boivin, S. (2013). *The Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES) Pilot Study: Technical Report* (NCES 2013-190). U.S Department of Education. Washington DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

certification as their highest credential. “High-quality” was defined by whether the holder of the postsecondary credential was working in a related field.⁵

The NEES asked a nationally representative sample of adults between the ages of 25 and 64 a series of questions in the following topic areas:

- Education (highest level, field of study, etc.)
- Certifications and licenses (acquisition, type, preparation, etc.)
- Certificates (acquisition, type, preparation, etc.)
- Work experience programs (internships, residency, compensation, work experiences, etc.)
- Employment (jobs, full-/part-time status, job title, salary, etc.)
- Background (marital status, race/ethnicity, etc.).

The survey is provided in Appendix A.

As of now, NORC has conducted two waves of data collection—Wave 1 and Wave 2. The first wave, which used a subset of questions from the ATEES Pilot Study, was conducted between January and February 2016. In the fall of 2016, Lumina asked NORC to conduct a second round of data collection, using the same questionnaire. This second wave was carried out in October-November 2016.

Our earlier report (Nichols-Lodato, Le, Yang, and Simko, September 2016)⁶ detailed results from Wave 1. This report presents findings from the two waves combined. The larger sample size allows for more detailed analyses (particularly those examining differences by race/ethnicity or gender) that were previously not possible because of small sample sizes.

Wave 1

NORC employed a dual frame sample design for the NEES effort. Frame A was the NORC National Frame, which is an address-based frame that covers the entire U.S. household population. Using this frame allowed the NEES to take advantage of NORC’s AmeriSpeak panel, yielding a representative sample for Frame A. The Frame A sample was selected using sampling strata defined by age, race/ethnicity, education, and gender (48 strata in total). The second frame, Frame B, was developed to ensure African American and Hispanic coverage and therefore was divided into two separate components:

⁵ We use the term “high-value”—a term that other studies have used to indicate value in the labor market—interchangeably with “high-quality” in this report.

⁶ Nichols-Lodato, B., Le, V.-N., Yang, M., and Simko, C. (2016). *Findings From The National Education and Employment Survey*. Chicago, IL: NORC at the University of Chicago.

Frame B African American and Frame B Hispanic American. Frame B was derived from targeted lists from a sample vendor that NORC frequently uses to support list sample surveys.

Table 1.1 presents the breakout of the selected sample by frame and race/ethnicity.

Table 1.1: NEES sample, by frame and group: Wave 1

Group	Frame A Sample Size	Frame B Sample Size	Total Sample Size
African American	1,069	2,870	3,939
Hispanic	739	3,287	4,026
Other Race	1,574	0	1,574
Total	3,382	6,157	9,539

To encourage response to the NEES and to accelerate the completion rate, Lumina approved NORC to offer incentives.

A total of 1,870 cases was defined as complete and 20 were considered partial completes with enough data up to Question 24. The final count for Frame A was 1,445 cases, including 17 partials, while the final count for Frame B was 445 cases, including three partials.

Table 1.2 below presents the final unweighted results for the NEES data collection.

Table 1.2: Sampling targets and final unweighted results for the NEES, by frame and group: Wave 1

	Frame A: CATI & Web*	Frame B: CATI	Total Sample	Completion Goals	Total Respondents
African American	1,069	2,870	3,939	515	595
Hispanic	739	3,287	4,026	477	407
Other Race	1,574	0	1,574	733	888
Total	3,382	6,157	9,539	1,725	1,890

Note: For Frame A, 1,134 cases were completed in web mode, while 311 were completed via CATI.

Wave 2

For Wave 2, NORC was able to capitalize on the increased size of NORC’s AmeriSpeak panel. As such, no supplemental sample (Frame B) was needed. All data collection was completed using the AmeriSpeak panel. The sample for NEES-W2 was selected from the AmeriSpeak Panel using sampling strata based on age, race/ethnicity, education, and gender (48 strata in total).

Table 1.3 presents the breakout of the selected Wave 2 sample. Again, we oversampled African Americans and Hispanics.

Table 1.3: Sample, by Group: Wave 2

Group	Sample Size
African American	1,698
Hispanic	1,770
Other	1,467
Total	4,935

As with Wave 1, to encourage response to the NEES-W2 and to accelerate the rate of completes, Lumina approved NORC to offer incentives. Table 1.4 presents the final unweighted results for the NEES-W2 data collection.

Table 1.4. Sampling targets and final unweighted results for the NEES, by group: Wave 2

Group	AmeriSpeak Sample	Completion Goals	Final Results
African American	1,698	616	682
Hispanic	1,770	614	607
Other	1,467	693	709
Total	4,935	1,923	1998

As a result, the combined data includes a total of 3,888 completes. The analyses reported here are based on the combined data.

Organization of the Report

The major focus of the study was the prevalence of postsecondary education and training, especially among those with no degrees and the report is organized around this theme. In the chapters to follow, we have weighted the data to allow inferences to the national population. We first present a profile of the survey population in terms of demographics, employment, and earnings. Chapters 3-5 are similarly organized but focus on (a) professional certifications/ state or industry licenses; (b) postsecondary certificates; and (c) work experience programs respectively. We refer to these as “work-related credentials.” In each case, we look at who has a particular credential or has participated in the program, whether they are working in a related field, perceptions of usefulness of the credential or program, and the extent to which working in a related field appears to affect earnings. In Chapter 6, we examine those with no degrees—a group for whom obtaining a work-related credential might be of particular importance in terms of getting access to better and potentially higher-paying jobs—and address similar questions regarding possession of a work-related credential and impacts on employment and earnings. Chapter 7 provides a brief summary of the main findings.

Limitations of the Analysis

The data reported here are simple weighted cross-tabulations. We note differences between groups that might be of interest but it should be emphasized that no significance tests were run on these differences to see if they were statistically significant. In addition, our findings simply represent correlations, not causative differences. For example, when we look at earnings by whether respondents were working in a related field, we have not controlled for other variables that might result in such differences (for example, industry, occupation, prior work experience, region etc.). In some instances, where we focused on a subgroup of respondents, small sample sizes precluded reporting of certain types of analyses, such as those relating to employment industry. Overall, this is a descriptive report, providing a look at the prevalence of postsecondary credentials and employment-related outcomes, based on two rounds of data collected in 2016.

2. Profile of the Survey Population

This chapter presents a profile of the NEES survey population, using data from the combined waves.

Demographic Characteristics

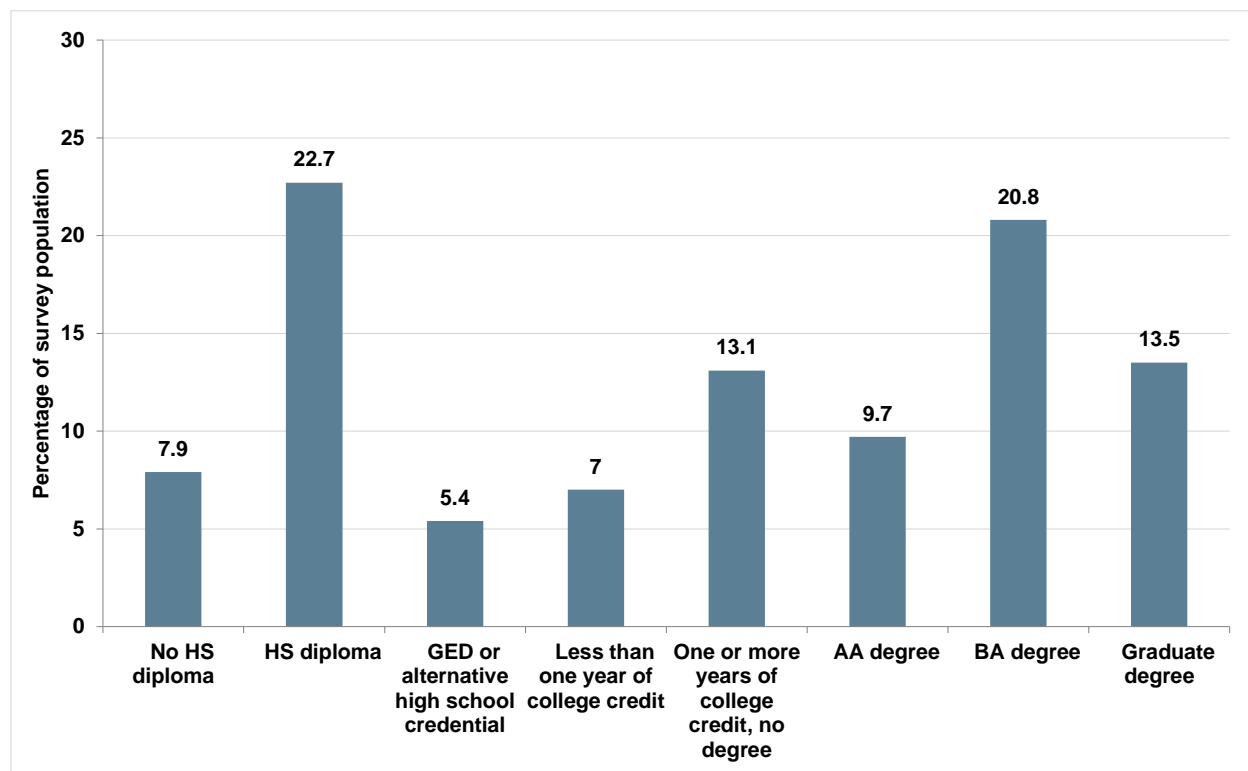
Table 2.1 shows demographic characteristics. Overall, 17 percent of the population identified themselves as of Hispanic origin. In terms of race, about 14 percent were African American, 77 percent were white, and the remaining 10 percent were of other races. The population was evenly divided between male and female and well over half (56 percent) were married. In terms of age, about 13 percent were between 25 and 29 years while another 12 percent were between 60 and 64 years. The rest of the population was pretty evenly divided among the 30-39, 40-49, and 50-59-year age groups (25 percent, 24 percent, and 26 percent, respectively).

Overall, about 8 percent of the survey population did not have a high school diploma while about 28 percent had a high school diploma or its equivalent (Figure 2.1). About one-fifth had some college but no degree. Close to one-tenth had an associate's degree while the remaining 34 percent had a bachelor's or more advanced graduate degree. Thus, about two-thirds of the survey population had a sub-baccalaureate education while 56 percent had no degrees.

Table 2.1: Demographic characteristics of the survey population

Selected characteristics	Percentage
Ethnicity	
Hispanic	16.6
Non-Hispanic	83.4
Race	
African American	13.5
White	76.9
Other race	9.7
Gender	
Male	49.1
Female	50.9
Marital status	
Single, never married	23.7
Divorced/separated/widowed	20.5
Married	55.7
Age	
25-29	13.3
30-34	12.5
35-39	12.4
40-44	10.7
45-49	13.4
50-54	11.9
55-59	14.3
60-64	11.5

Figure 2.1: Highest degree or level of school completed among the survey population



Employment Characteristics

Table 2.2 shows the distribution of the population by employment status and type of employer. About two-thirds (64 percent) of the population was employed and over half (54 percent) were employed full-time.⁷ Another 8 percent reported that they were unemployed but were currently looking for work while the remaining 28 percent were not working and not looking for work. Of those who were employed either full-time or part-time, over 70 percent (73 percent) were working for a private company/business/individual, another 18 percent were working for the government (local, state, or federal) and another 9 percent were self-employed. A very small percentage (less than two-tenths of one percent) of respondents were working without pay for the family business or farm.

⁷ Respondents who reported having both a full-time and part-time job were classified as working full-time.

Table 2.2: Employment status and type of employer

Employment status	Percentage
Working full-time	54.1
Working part-time	9.7
Unemployed, looking for work	7.5
Not in labor force	28.7
Of those employed:	
Type of employer	Percentage of those employed
An employee of a private company, business, or individual, for wages, salary, or commission	73.1
A local (city, county, etc.), state, or federal government employee	18.3
Self-employed in own business, professional practice, or farm	8.5
Working without pay for family business or farm	0.2

We also examined differences in employment status by race/ethnicity, age, and education (Table 2.3). Hispanics and African Americans were somewhat less likely to be employed full-time (7-12 percentage point difference) and somewhat more likely to report that they were unemployed and looking for work than their counterparts (5-7 percentage point difference). Women were far less likely than men to be employed full-time (47 percent versus 61 percent) and more likely not to be working outside the home (“not in labor force:” 34 percent versus 24 percent).

Not surprisingly, we see marked differences in employment status by both education and age. For example, 58 percent of those without a high school diploma were not in the labor force compared with 36 percent of those with a high school diploma and 14-24 percent of those with a degree. Having a degree increased the likelihood of being employed full-time. For example, 61 percent of those with an associate’s degree, 66 percent of those with a bachelor’s, and 76 percent of those with a graduate degree were employed full-time compared with 41-48 percent of those with a high school diploma or equivalent or some college, but no degree. Only 24 percent of those without a high school diploma were employed full-time.

Table 2.3: Characteristics of survey population by employment status

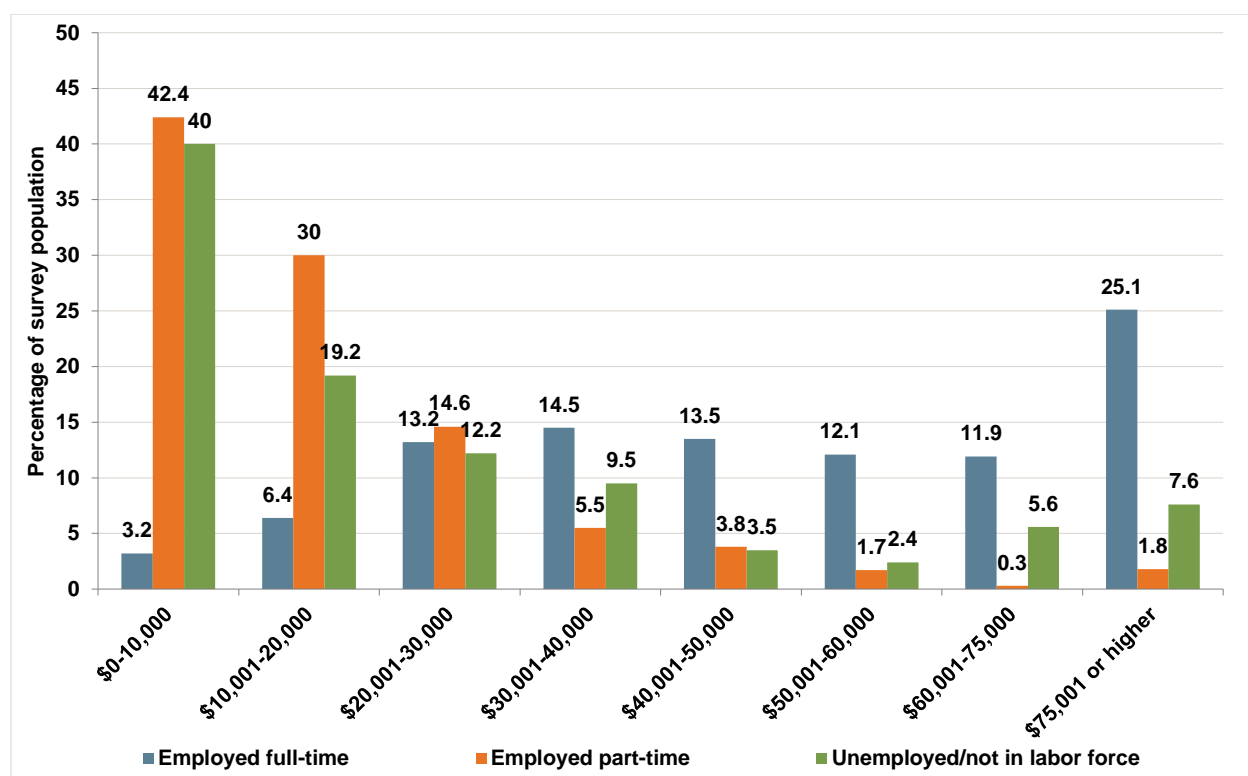
Selected Characteristics	Employed full-time	Employed part-time	Unemployed, currently looking for work	Not in labor force
Overall	54.1	9.7	7.5	28.7
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	48.1	8.8	11.3	31.8
Non-Hispanic	55.2	9.9	6.7	28.1
Race				
African American	45.0	9.6	13.0	32.5
White	56.7	9.8	5.8	27.7
Gender				
Male	61.3	7.0	7.9	23.8
Female	47.0	12.4	7.1	33.5
Highest degree or level of school completed				
No HS diploma	24.2	6.6	11.5	57.7
HS diploma	46.9	8.4	8.8	35.9
GED or alternative high school credential	40.7	10.7	6.6	42.0
Less than one year of college credit	47.2	11.8	10.6	30.5
One or more years of college credit, no degree	47.9	14.5	10.5	27.1
AA degree	60.5	9.6	5.8	24.1
BA degree	65.7	11.3	4.5	18.6
Graduate degree	75.9	5.4	4.7	14.0
Age				
25-29	56.8	11.6	10.8	20.9
30-34	66.1	9.7	5.6	18.7
35-39	56.9	12.1	8.9	22.1
40-44	56.1	5.9	9.9	28.2
45-49	62.2	7.1	8.4	22.3
50-54	53.6	9.8	8.0	28.7
55-59	45.5	9.2	5.0	40.4
60-64	34.1	12.5	3.8	49.6

Those aged 30-34 years had the highest percentage of full-time workers (66 percent) compared with 59-62 percent of those between 35 and 49 years in age. This percentage decreased sharply for the older groups and was 34 percent for those 60-64 years old. Not surprisingly, younger groups had smaller percentages of those not working than the older groups: 19-22 percent among those aged 25-39 years, 22-29 percent among those aged 40-54, and 40-50 percent among those 55 and older.

Figure 2.2 presents earnings from all jobs over the past 12 months by employment status:

- Among those employed full-time, the median income range was between \$40,001 and \$50,000, and one-quarter earned more than \$75,000. Only about 10 percent reported earning \$20,000 or less.
- Among those employed part-time, the median income range was between \$10,001 and \$20,000 and over 70 percent (72 percent) earned \$20,000 or less. About 2 percent reported earnings of over \$75,000.
- The median income range for those unemployed or not in the labor force was between \$10,001 and \$20,000 while two-fifths earned \$10,000 or less. About 8 percent reported earnings greater than \$75,000.

Figure 2.2: Earnings* from all jobs over the past 12 months by employment status



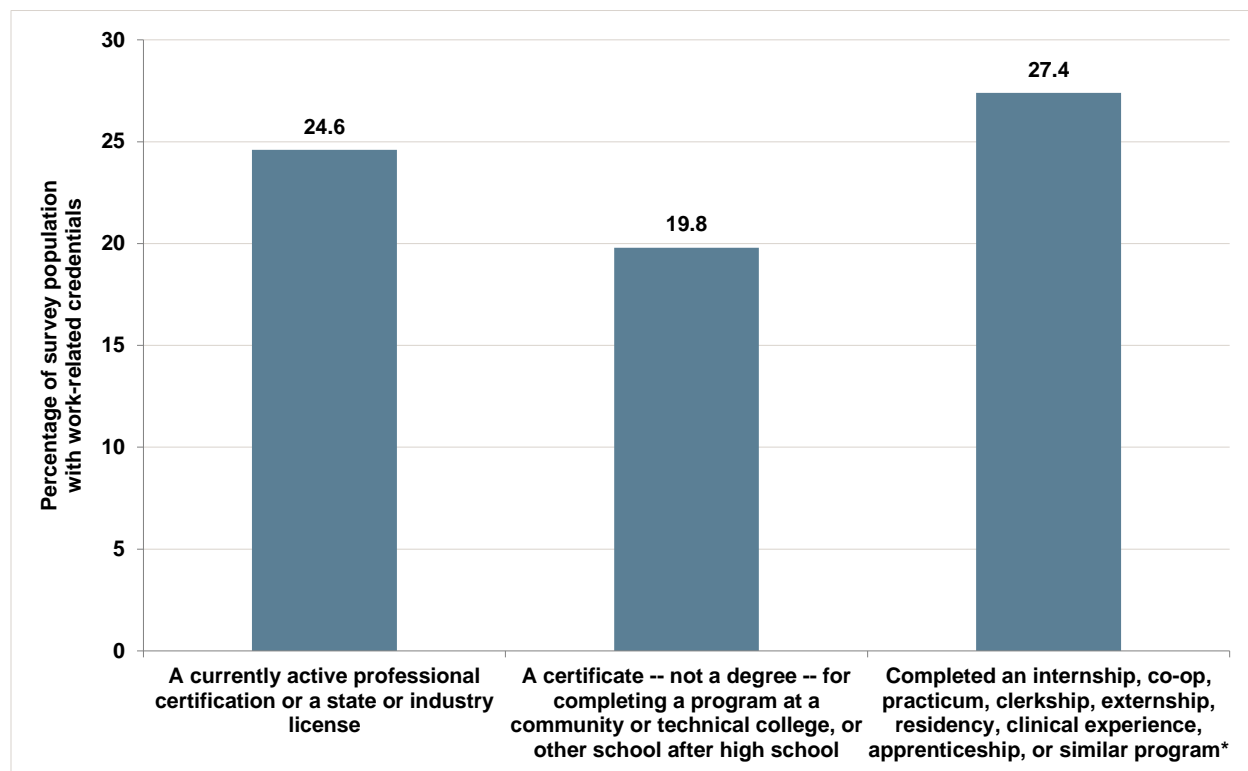
Note: *Includes wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, and tips.

Prevalence of Professional Certification and Licenses, Postsecondary Certificates, and Work Experience Programs

As mentioned earlier, the major purpose of the NEES was to estimate the prevalence of work-related credentials among the working age population 25 to 64 years in age. These include professional certifications or state or industry licenses; postsecondary certificates; and work experience programs, as shown in Figure 2.3. About one-quarter of the survey population had a currently active professional certification or state or industry license. About one-fifth had earned a postsecondary certificate. Another

27 percent reported that they had completed a work experience program. The small percentage who reported they were currently in a work experience program were excluded from the analyses reported here and in subsequent chapters because we were primarily interested in the experiences and perceptions of those who had completed such a program.

Figure 2.3: Percentage of survey population that had a professional certification/state or industry license, a postsecondary certificate, or had completed a work experience program



Note: *A small percentage (less than two percent) who reported they were currently in a work experience program were excluded from the graph.

Some respondents had more than one type of work-related credential. For example, among those with a professional certification/state or industry license, 8 percent reported that they had also completed a work experience program while another 4 percent reported that they had a postsecondary certificate. Another 4 percent reported having a postsecondary certificate and completing a work experience program. A small percentage (3 percent) mentioned having all three types of credentials. Overall, 10 percent had only a professional certification/state or industry license, 9 percent had only a postsecondary certificate, and 13 percent had completed only a work experience program.

3. Professional Certifications/State or Industry Licenses

The next three chapters focus on each of the work-related credentials. We begin with an examination of professional certifications and state or industry licenses.

Demographic Profile

As noted earlier, about one-quarter of the survey population had a currently active professional certification/state or industry license. There was little difference in the percentage of certification/license holders by race, ethnicity, or gender, as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Selected demographic characteristics of those holding currently active professional certification or state or industry license

	Percentage of group with currently active professional certification or state or industry license
Overall	24.6
Ethnicity	
Hispanic	23.6
Non-Hispanic	24.7
Race	
African American	26.4
White	24.6
Gender	
Male	25.5
Female	23.5

Defining High-Value Certifications/Licenses

We define a high-value credential as one that leads to or is associated with employment in a related field. We addressed the issue of high-value credentials in two ways. First, we examined those with a credential who reported that they were currently working to see who reported working in a field somewhat or very related to the credential. This provides an initial estimate of high-value credentials among those currently employed. We then examined differences among those currently employed in the percentages having high-value credentials by race/ethnicity and gender. This seemed a more meaningful comparison as it looked only at those currently employed.

Second, in order to get an estimate for the overall survey population, we needed to account for individuals who had the credential but were not currently working, those who did not have the credential, and the small subset that were missing responses to the questions about whether they had the credential and

employment status. To get the most conservative estimate, we treated the last group as not having the credential. Accounting for all these groups allows us to estimate the percentage of the overall survey population who held high-value credentials.

If we look at those *currently working*, we find that about 80 percent reported that they were working in a related field and thus held high-value professional certifications/industry licenses. However, some who had a professional certification/industry license were either not working or did not answer the question. To calculate the percent of the overall survey population that had a high-value certification/license, we need to account for these individuals as well. Overall, about 18 percent held high-value professional certifications or state or industry licenses, i.e., they worked in fields related to their professional credential, 5 percent held professional certifications/licenses but were working out of field, 2 percent were not working, and 76 percent did not have the credential or were missing responses to these questions.

There was little difference in terms of race, ethnicity, or gender, in the proportion that had high-value certifications/licenses. For example, 19 percent of African Americans held high-value certifications/licenses compared with 18 percent of whites.

Reported Usefulness of Certifications/Licenses in Employment-Related Outcomes

Respondents with certifications or licenses were asked about how useful these were in terms of getting a job, keeping a job, keeping them marketable to employers or clients, and improving their work skills. Because it seemed likely that perceived usefulness would vary depending on whether the respondent was working in a related field, we disaggregated the responses by whether the certification/license was for the current job or not (Table 3.2). We limited the analysis to those currently employed.

Not surprisingly, those working in a related field rated the usefulness of the certification/license much more highly than did those not working in a related field. For example, while the overwhelming majority (82-85 percent) of those working in a related field reported that the certification/license was “very useful” in getting a job, keeping a job, or keeping respondents marketable to employers or clients, about half or less than half of the respondents working out of field did so (44-50 percent). Conversely, the numbers reporting that the certification/license was “not useful” in getting or keeping a job were much lower among those working in a related field compared to their counterparts (5-7 percent compared with 24-37 percent).

Those working out of field were somewhat more sanguine about the value of the certification/license in keeping them marketable to employers and clients with 80 percent agreeing that it was “somewhat” or “very useful.” The corresponding number for those working in field was 98 percent.

Table 3.2: Reported usefulness of certification and licenses among those with currently active professional certification or state or industry license and currently employed

	Percentage of those with professional certification/license and currently employed*		
	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
Getting a job			
Certification/license related to current job	7.4	10.7	81.9
Certification/license not related to current job	24.1	31.9	44.0
Keeping a job			
Certification/license related to current job	4.7	11.8	83.5
Certification/license not related to current job	36.9	19.5	43.7
Keeping you marketable to employers or clients			
Certification/license related to current job	2.0	12.7	85.3
Certification/license not related to current job	20.6	29.9	49.5
Improving your work skills			
Certification/license related to current job	9.3	28.2	62.5
Certification/license not related to current job	25.6	31.3	43.1

Note: *Table omits the “too soon to tell” response, which typically comprises less than three percent of responses.

Respondents were not quite as positive about the effect of the certification/license in improving work skills. A smaller percentage (63 percent) of those working in field rated the certification/license as “very useful” in this area compared to the other three topics about which they were asked and a somewhat higher percentage ranked the certification/license as “somewhat useful” (approximately 28 percent compared to around 11-13 percent on the other three topics).

We also examined differences in perceived usefulness of certification and licenses among current holders by ethnicity, race, and gender, which we were not able to do with just the Wave 1 data. We were primarily interested in the opinions of those holding high-value certifications/licenses. Overall, with some exceptions, among those certification/license holders working in related fields, Hispanics, African Americans, and women tended to rate the certification/license somewhat more highly in terms of the workplace (getting a job, keeping a job, keeping them marketable to employers or clients, improving their work skills) than their counterparts. For example:

- With one exception, Hispanics tended to rate the certification/license as “very useful” more frequently than non-Hispanics and the difference ranged between 2 and 6 percentage points. For example, 85-87 percent of Hispanics rated the certification/license as “very useful” in getting and

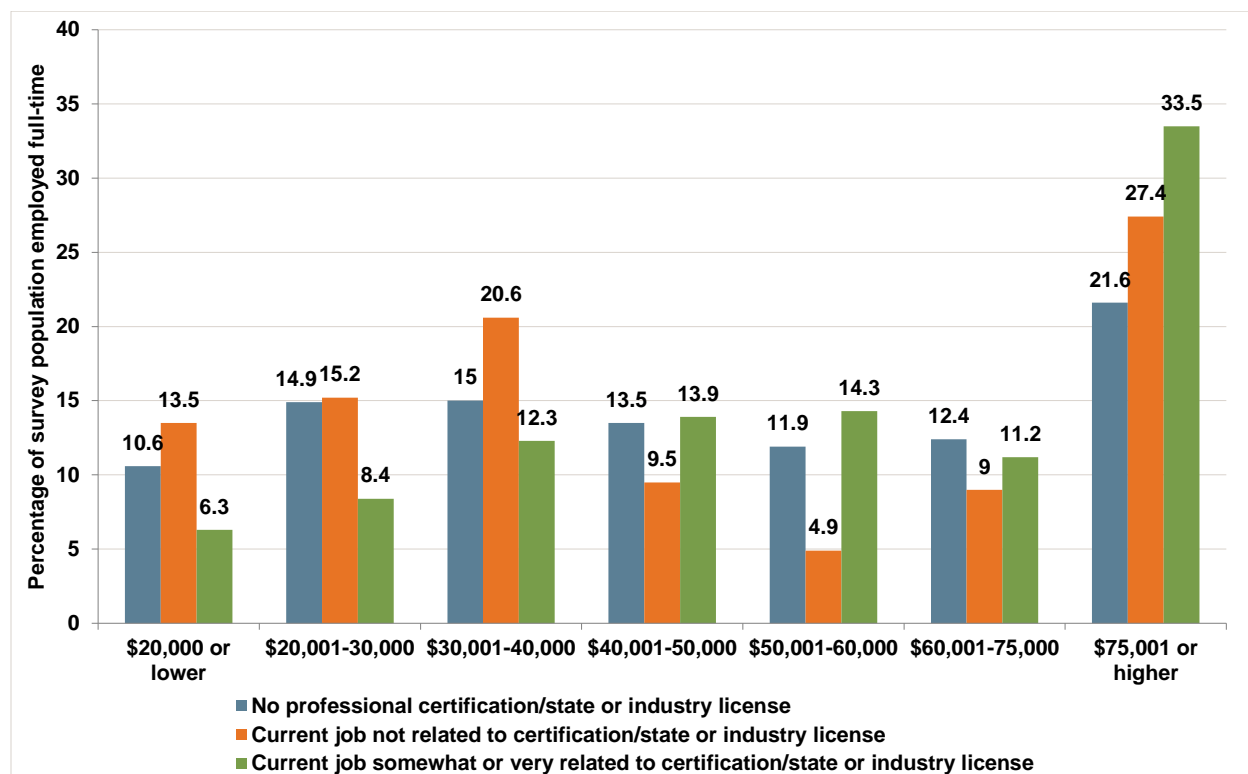
keeping a job compared with 81-83 percent of non-Hispanics. However, about 86 percent of non-Hispanics rated the certification/license “very useful” in keeping them marketable to employers or clients compared with 80 percent of Hispanics.

- African Americans were more positive than whites in their ratings of the usefulness of the certification/license. For example, in terms of getting a job, 90 percent of blacks reported that the certification/license was “very useful” compared to 80 percent of whites. The difference was even more marked in terms of improving work skills (77 percent versus 59 percent).
- Similarly, 87-89 percent women reported that the certification/license was “very useful” in getting a job, keeping a job, and keeping them marketable to employers or clients compared with 75-83 percent of men. The difference was smaller with respect to improving work skills—5 percentage points—with 65 percent of women and 60 percent of men ranking the certification/license as “very useful.”

Earnings of Full-Time Workers with and without Certifications/Licenses

We looked at earnings of those with and without certifications/licenses among those working full-time and further disaggregated those with certifications/licenses by whether they were working in a related field (Figure 3.1). As we noted before, sample sizes do not allow us to control for the myriad variables that affect earnings including industry, occupation, educational attainment, demographic characteristics, and prior work experience. As such, the findings are interesting but suggestive at best.

Figure 3.1: Earnings* from all jobs over the past 12 months by whether respondent had a professional certification/state or industry license and was working in a related field, among those employed full-time



Note: *Includes wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, and tips.

The figure shows that working in a related field is clearly associated with higher income. Full-time workers with a professional certification/license in the field in which they were working tended to have higher earnings than those without a certification/license and those with certifications/licenses who were not working in a related field. For example, the median income range for those without high-value certifications/licenses (the latter two groups) was between \$40,001 and \$50,000 compared with \$50,001-\$60,000 for those with high-value certifications/licenses. The differences are more pronounced when one examines the two ends of the distribution. For example, while between 26 and 29 percent of those without high-value certifications/licenses earned \$30,000 or below, only 15 percent of those with high-value certifications/licenses did so. At the top end, 45 percent of those with a certification/license working in field earned more than \$60,000 compared with 34-36 percent of those without a certification/license and those working out of field.

4. Postsecondary Certificates

Types of Certificates

Overall, as we saw earlier, about 20 percent of the population had earned postsecondary certificates. Respondents were asked about various types of certificates they had earned in order to help identify those who had received the kind of postsecondary certificate in which the Lumina Foundation was primarily interested. Well over two-fifths (44 percent) had a certificate for completing a training program offered through their employer, union, industry, or other training providers while between 14 and 16 percent had earned certificates for completing vocational programs at a high school or a high school equivalency program. One-fifth of respondents had earned a certificate—not a degree—at a college or other school after high school, which the survey identified as a “postsecondary certificate.” Respondents who reported earning such certificates were then asked a series of questions about their programs, whether individuals were working in a related field, and the perceived usefulness of such programs with respect to employment outcomes. The remainder of the chapter focuses on these postsecondary certificates.

Table 4.1: Prevalence of certificates of different kinds in the survey population

	Percentage
A certificate for completing a training program from an employer, employment agency, union, software or equipment manufacturer, or other training provider	44.1
A certificate for completing a vocational program at a high school	14.1
A high school equivalency certificate, such as a GED	16.3
A certificate—not a degree—for completing a program at a community or technical college, or other school after high school (excluding teaching certificates or college degrees)*	19.8

Note: * In subsequent tables, these types of certificates are referred to as “postsecondary certificates.”

Demographic Profile

Table 4.2 shows percentages earning postsecondary certificates by race/ethnicity and gender. Hispanics were somewhat more likely than non-Hispanics to earn such certificates (22 percent versus 19 percent) and African Americans were much more likely to earn postsecondary certificates compared with whites (29 percent versus 18 percent). There was little difference by gender.

Table 4.2: Percentage with postsecondary certificates by race, ethnicity, and gender, and educational attainment

	Percentage of group who earned a postsecondary certificate
Overall	19.8
Ethnicity	
Hispanic	22.3
Non-Hispanic	19.3
Race	
African American	28.5
White	17.8
Gender	
Male	20.3
Female	19.3

Defining High-Value Postsecondary Certificates

Table 4.3 shows, for those currently employed, whether the current job is related to the postsecondary certificate. About 53 percent were working in fields somewhat or very related to the postsecondary certificate (which we refer to as “high-value postsecondary credentials”) while the remaining 47 percent were not. However, as we noted in the earlier chapter, some with the credential were not currently working and some failed to answer one or both questions regarding the credential and current employment status.

Overall, the percentage with high-value postsecondary credentials in the survey population was 8 percent. Another 8 percent had the credential but were working out of field while about 4 percent had the credential but were not currently working. The remaining 80 percent either did not have the credential or were missing responses to one or both questions.

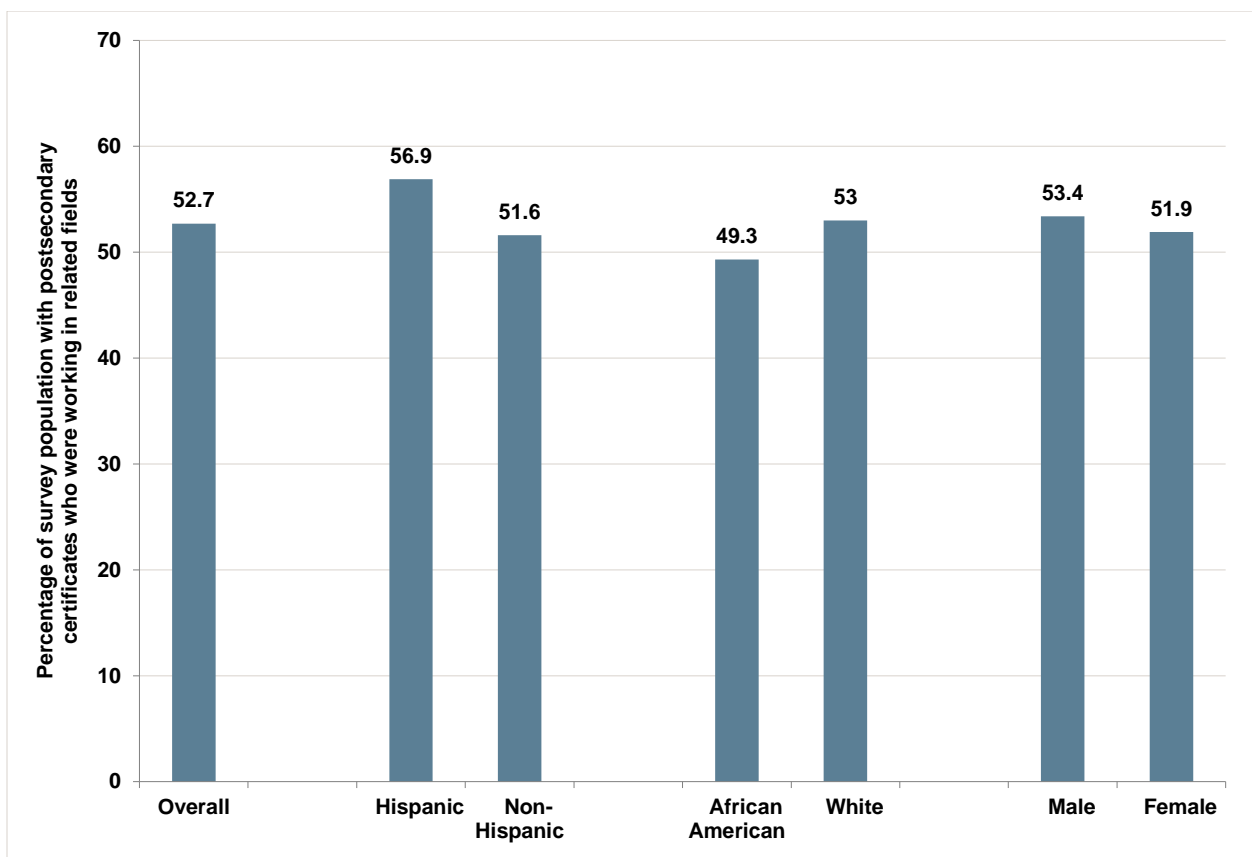
Because our primary interest is in high-value postsecondary credentials, the rest of the chapter examines differences by whether the credential was related to the current job or not, among those currently working.

Table 4.3: Relationship of current job to postsecondary certificate among those currently working

Current job is related to postsecondary certificate	Percentage of those with postsecondary certificates
No	47.3
Somewhat related	19.3
Very related	33.4

We find a few differences by ethnicity and race in the percentages of certificate holders who were working in a related field and thus, by definition, held high-value certificates (Figure 4.1). The percentage of Hispanics who were working in a related field tended to be somewhat higher than the percentage of non-Hispanics (57 percent versus 52 percent) while the reverse was true of African Americans compared to whites (49 percent versus 53 percent).

Figure 4.1: Percentage of postsecondary certificate holders by selected characteristics who were working in jobs related to postsecondary certificate (among those currently working)



Reported Usefulness of Postsecondary Certificates in Employment-Related Outcomes

Respondents with postsecondary certificates were asked about how useful these were in terms of getting a job, increasing pay, and improving work skills. As before, we disaggregated the responses based on whether the respondent was working in a related field or not (Table 4.4). We limited the analysis to those who were currently employed.

Table 4.4: Reported usefulness of postsecondary certificates by whether respondent’s current job is related to postsecondary certificate among those currently employed

	Percentage of those with postsecondary certificates*		
	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
Getting a job			
Current job somewhat or very related to postsecondary certificate	9.4	24.3	66.3
Current job not related to postsecondary certificate	45.0	33.2	21.8
Increasing your pay			
Current job somewhat or very related to postsecondary certificate	18.8	29.5	51.8
Current job not related to postsecondary certificate	58.1	23.0	19.0
Improving your work skills			
Current job somewhat or very related to postsecondary certificate	3.1	20.4	76.5
Current job not related to postsecondary certificate	29.0	32.7	38.4

Note: *Table omits the “too soon to tell” response, which typically comprises less than five percent of responses.

Not surprisingly, respondents working in a related field rated the certificate highly in terms of usefulness in getting a job, increasing your pay, and improving work skills. Between 81 and 91 percent ranked the certificate as “somewhat” or “very useful” in getting a job and increasing their pay, with between 52 and 66 percent ranking it as “very useful.” About 55 percent of those not working in a related field rated the certificate as “somewhat” or “very useful” in getting a job while only 42 percent did so in terms of increasing pay. Almost all (97 percent) of the respondents working in a related field ranked the certificate as useful in improving work skills. Those not working in a related field also ranked the certificate highly in this regard with 71 percent reporting the certificate was “somewhat” or “very useful” in improving work skills.

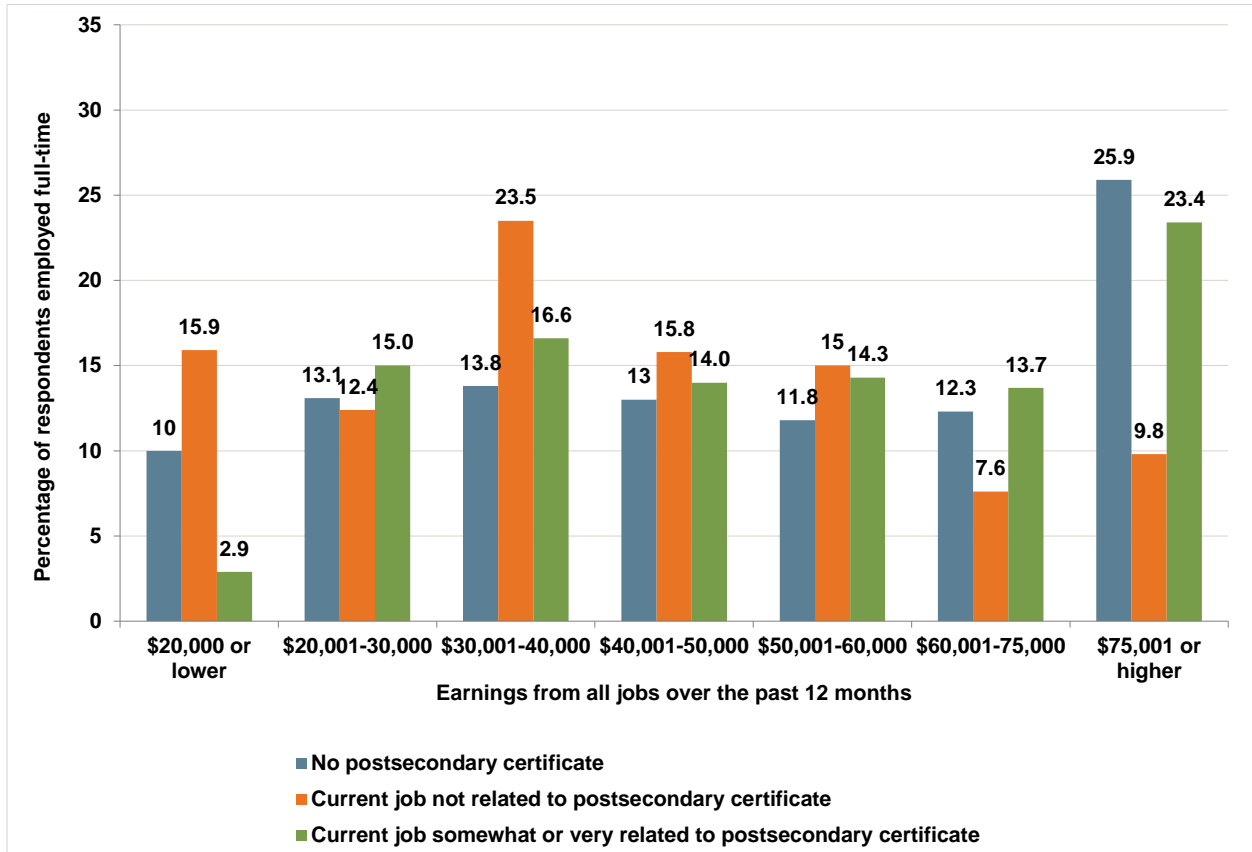
As we had seen in the earlier chapter, among those who had earned postsecondary certificates and worked in a related field, Hispanics and African Americans tended to rate the credential more highly (“very useful”) for some work-related outcomes (getting a job, increasing your pay) compared with their counterparts. For example, while 73 percent of Hispanics ranked the postsecondary certificate as “very useful” in getting a job, only 64 percent of non-Hispanics did so. Similarly, while 66 percent of African Americans rated the certificate as “very useful” in increasing pay, less than half of the whites did so. Women were more positive than men regarding the certificate’s impact on getting a job, with 72 percent rating it as “very useful” compared with 61 percent of men.

Earnings of Full-Time Workers with and without Postsecondary Certificates

Figure 4.2 compares earnings for respondents with and without postsecondary certificates who are employed full-time and further disaggregates whether the certificate holder was working in a related field. Those without a postsecondary certificate tended to cluster at the lower and higher ends of the earnings distribution—the latter being largely driven by the number of individuals with higher education degrees who did not obtain a certificate. For example, over one-quarter (26 percent) had earnings of over \$75,000 compared to the 10-23 percent of certificate holders.

However, with this exception, we find that those with a high-value certificate tended to have higher incomes than those without a certificate and those with a certificate but not working in a related field. For example, while almost one quarter or more (23-28 percent) of the latter two groups earned \$30,000 or less, this was true of only 18 percent of those working in a related field. The median income range was \$30,001-\$40,000 for those with a postsecondary certificate but not working in a related field and \$50,001-\$60,000 for both those with a high-value certificate and those without a certificate.

Figure 4.2: Earnings* from all jobs over the past 12 months by whether respondent’s current job is related to postsecondary certificate, among those employed full-time



Note: *Includes wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, and tips.

5. Work Experience Programs

We had reported in Chapter 2 that 27 percent of survey respondents had completed a work experience program and another one percent of respondents were currently enrolled in such a program. This chapter examines the characteristics and perceptions of usefulness of such programs along with reported earnings of those who had and had not completed such programs.

Demographic Profile

As Table 5.1 shows, there were no differences by race and ethnicity among those who had completed a work experience program. However, while just under a third (31 percent) of women in the survey population reported having completed a work experience program, this was true of only 23 percent of men.

Table 5.1: Selected demographic characteristics by whether respondents completed a work experience program*

	Completed a work experience program
Overall	27.4
Ethnicity	
Hispanic	26.6
Non-Hispanic	27.5
Race	
African American	27.4
White	27.6
Gender	
Male	23.4
Female	31.1

Note: The table excludes the less than two percent who reported they were currently participating in a work experience program.

Defining High-Value Work Experience Programs

As in the last two chapters, we define high-value work experience programs as those that enable their participants directly or indirectly to work in related fields. Among those currently working, a little under two-thirds (64 percent) of those who had completed a work experience program were currently working in a field somewhat or very related to the program (Table 5.2). Among the currently employed group, there was little difference in the percentage that had completed a high-value work experience program by race or ethnicity. However, a higher percentage of men than women were working in a field related to their work experience program (68 percent versus 61 percent).

Of the overall survey population, about 15 percent had a “high-value” experience that enabled them directly or indirectly to work in a related field, another 8 percent had completed a work experience program but were not working in a related field, 4 percent had the credential but were not currently working, and the remaining 73 percent had not completed a work experience program or had failed to respond to the questions.

Table 5.2: Relationship of current job to work experience program among those currently working

Current job is related to work experience program	Percentage of those who had completed a work experience program
No	35.8
Somewhat related	23.1
Very related	41.2

Reported Usefulness of Work Experience Programs in Employment-Related Outcomes

Table 5.3 examines the perceived usefulness of work experience programs with respect to getting a job, increasing your pay, or improving your work skills by whether the respondent’s current job was related to the work experience program.

Table 5.3: Reported usefulness of work experience program by whether respondent’s current job is related to work experience program

	Percentage of those who had completed a work experience program*		
	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
Getting a job			
Current job somewhat or very related to work experience program	5.5	22.2	72.3
Current job not related to work experience program	25.3	41.8	32.9
Increasing your pay			
Current job somewhat or very related to work experience program	25.3	27.2	47.5
Current job not related to work experience program	51.4	28.7	20.0
Improving your work skills			
Current job somewhat or very related to work experience program	2.0	26.8	71.2
Current job not related to work experience program	14.9	36.7	48.4

Note: *Table omits the “too soon to tell” response, which typically comprises less than one percent of responses.

Working in field greatly enhances the value of the program in terms of getting a job, increasing your pay, and most especially, improving your work skills but even those working out of field seemed to regard the program as useful in getting a job and enhancing their work skills. For example, while 94 percent of those working in a related field ranked the work experience program as “somewhat” or “very useful” (with over

70 percent saying it was “very useful”) in getting a job, three-quarters of those working out of field did so as well. Almost all of those working in a related field rated the work experience program as “somewhat” or “very useful” in improving work skills as did 85 percent of those working out of field. Obviously, those with high-value credentials were much more likely to rank the work experience program as “very useful” in these aspects compared with those who were not working in a related field.

Not surprisingly, we see some large differences in the usefulness of the program in terms of increasing pay between those working in a related field and their counterparts. For example, while three-quarters of those working in field reported that the program helped increase their pay, this was true of less than half (49 percent) of those working out of field and the difference is largely being driven by those ranking the program as “very useful” (48 percent versus 20 percent).

In terms of differences in perceptions of overall usefulness of the work experience program among respondents with high-value credentials, we find the usual differences by race/ethnicity but a surprising reversal in terms of gender differences.

Hispanics were more positive about the impact of the work experience program in terms of getting a job than non-Hispanics, markedly so when asked about effect on pay and work skills. For example, while 57 percent of Hispanics rated the program as “very useful” in terms of increasing pay, only 46 percent of non-Hispanics did so. Similarly, while 81 percent of Hispanics reported that the program was “very useful” in improving work skills, this was true of only 69 percent of non-Hispanics.

African Americans were also more positive than whites about the effect of the work experience program in terms of work-related outcomes and as above, the differences were more marked with respect to increase in pay and improvement in work skills. For example, while 56 percent of African Americans ranked the program as “very useful” in increasing pay, only 43 percent of whites did so. Similarly, there was a 9 percentage point difference between the two groups with respect to the program being “very useful” in improving work skills (77 percent versus 68 percent respectively).

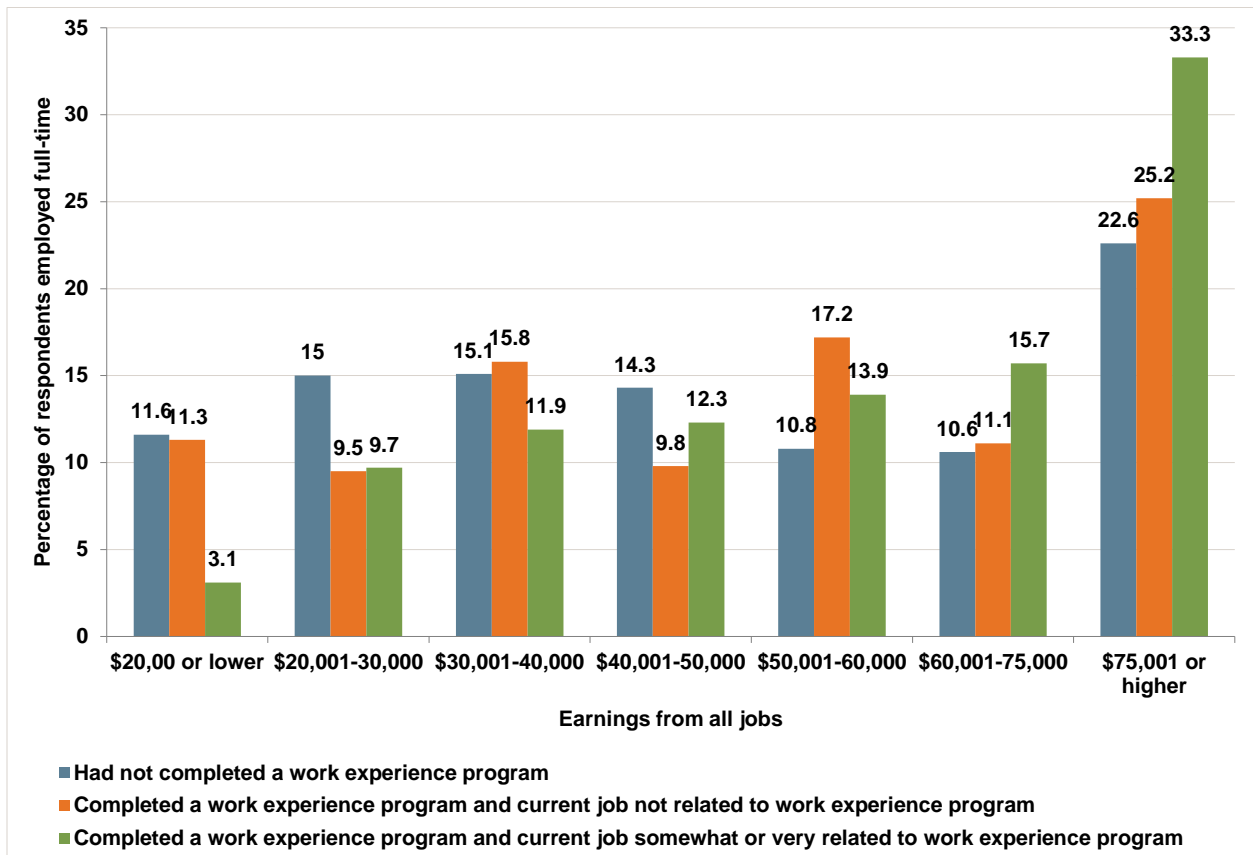
Contrary to what we found earlier, women were somewhat less sanguine than men in their perceptions of the usefulness of the program, particularly with regard to effect on pay. For example, only 42 percent of women rated the program as “very useful” in increasing pay compared with 54 percent of men. The differences were much smaller with respect to getting a job and improving work skills.

Earnings of Full-Time Workers who had and had not completed a Work Experience Program

Those who had completed a work experience program tended to have higher earnings than those who had not, although it must be remembered that many of these programs tended to be associated with degree programs, which typically are associated with higher-paying jobs. Figure 5.1 displays the distribution of earnings for those who had and had not completed a work experience program and among those who had completed such a program, by whether they were currently working in a related field.

Those with the credential and working in a related field reported much higher income than those without the credential or those with the credential who were working out of field. Even simply having the credential appears to be associated with somewhat higher income, particularly at the lower end of the distribution. For example, the median income range for those who had not completed a work experience program was \$40,001-\$50,000 compared with \$50,001-\$60,000 for those who had completed such a program, regardless of whether they were working in a related field. Over one-quarter (27 percent) of those who had not completed a work experience program earned \$30,000 or less compared with about one-fifth (21 percent) of those who had completed such a program and were not working in a related field and only 13 percent of those with the credential who were working in a related field. At the top half of the distribution, the pay-off to working in a related field seems more marked. For example, one-half of respondents with high-value credentials reported earnings of over \$60,000 and one-third reported earnings of over \$75,000. The corresponding numbers for those without a credential and those working out of field were 33 percent and 36 percent respectively with 23-25 percent reporting earnings of over \$75,000.

Figure 5.1: Earnings* from all jobs over the past 12 months by whether respondent’s current job is related to work experience program



Note: *Includes wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, and tips.

6. The Non-Degreed Survey Population: Characteristics and Experiences

As noted earlier, the group with no degrees—56 percent of the survey population—is of particular interest because the types of work-related credentials—professional certifications/state or industry licenses, postsecondary credentials, and work experience programs—discussed here could offer members of this group a gateway to gainful employment and perhaps higher pay. The group is somewhat heterogeneous—some have a high school diploma while others have not completed high school or have some college credit—but the one characteristic they have in common is the lack of a degree—either an associate’s, a bachelor’s, or an advanced degree.

This chapter first presents a profile of those with no degrees and then discusses the prevalence of work-related credentials among this group and the impact on employment and earnings.

Demographic Profile

A higher percentage of Hispanics than non-Hispanics did not have degrees: 66 percent versus 54 percent. This was true of African Americans compared to whites (63 percent versus 54 percent). There was little difference in terms of gender.

Table 6.1: Selected demographic characteristics of those with no degrees in the survey population

	Percentage of those with no degrees
Ethnicity	
Hispanic	65.7
Non-Hispanic	54.2
Race	
African American	63.4
White	54.1
Gender	
Male	55.8
Female	56.4

Employment Characteristics

In terms of employment status, less than half (43 percent) of those with no degrees were employed full-time while another 46 percent were either unemployed or not in the labor force (Table 6.2). About 10 percent were working part-time.

Table 6.2: Employment status of those with no degrees in the survey population

Employment status	Percentage of those with no degrees
Working full-time	43.4
Working part-time	10.2
Unemployed, looking for work	9.6
Not in labor force	36.8

Table 6.3 examines the earnings of respondents with no degrees, which tend to be considerably lower than their degreed counterparts, not surprisingly, given the close link between educational attainment and earnings. Among those employed full-time, the median income range was \$30,001-40,000 and close to two-fifths (38 percent) had earnings of \$30,000 or lower. However, 10 percent reported earnings of greater than \$75,000.

Table 6.3: Earnings* from all jobs over the past 12 months of those with no degrees and employed full-time

	Percentage of those with no degrees, working full-time
\$20,000 or lower	15.5
\$20,001-30,000	22.6
\$30,001-40,000	18.2
\$40,001-50,000	13.7
\$50,001-60,000	11.4
\$60,001-75,000	8.3
\$75,001 or higher	10.3

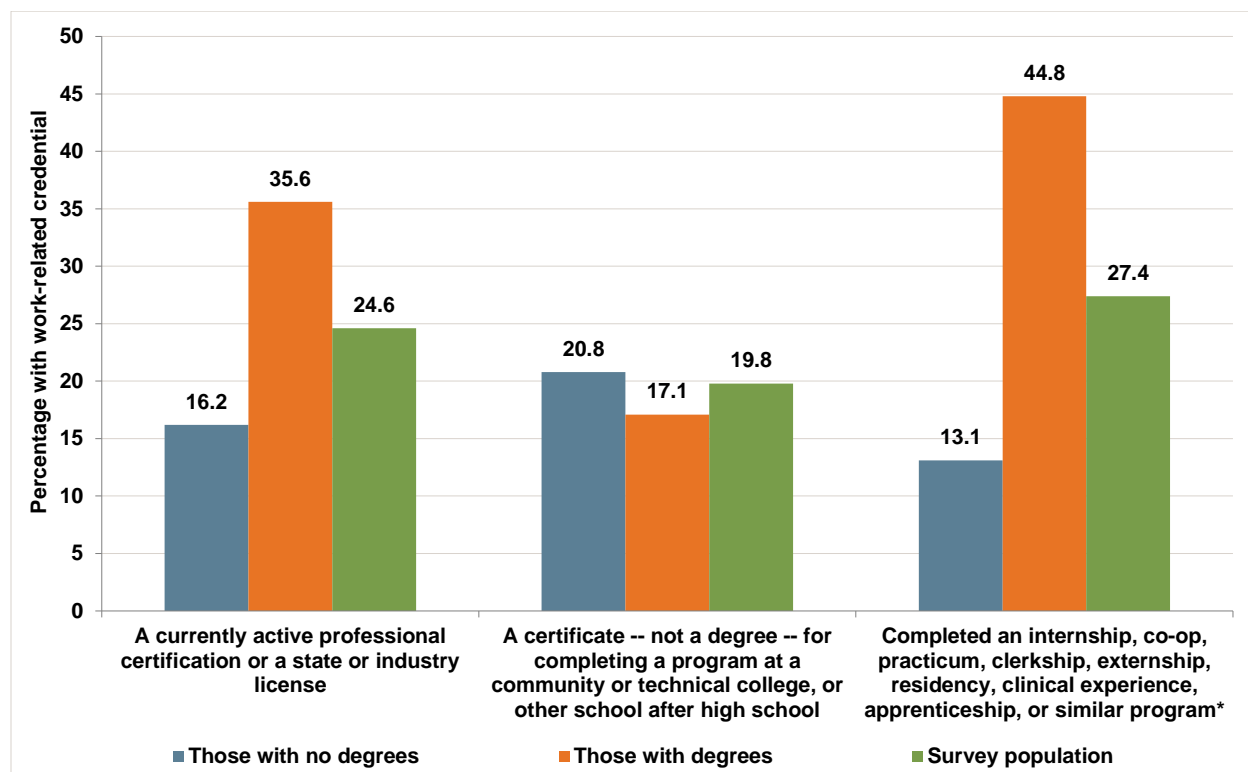
Note: *Includes wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, and tips

Prevalence of Professional Certification and Licenses, Postsecondary Certificates, and Work Experience Programs

Overall, about 64 percent of those with no degrees had no work-related credentials. As shown in Figure 6.1, about 16 percent had a professional certification or state or industry license while a little over one-fifth had a postsecondary credential.⁸ Only 13 percent had completed a work experience program. For comparison purposes, we also looked at the prevalence of these work-related credentials among those with degrees. Compared with those with no degrees, individuals with degrees reported a much higher incidence (35 percent) of holding professional certifications/licenses and a considerably higher rate (46 percent) of completion of a work experience program. This is not surprising, given that many professions (teaching, accounting, nursing, among others) include a practicum, clinical experience, or internship and

⁸ In calculating the percentage of postsecondary credential holders, we excluded the small percentage of respondents who reported that their certificate program required enrollment in a degree program. This was to better estimate the proportion of the postsecondary certificate holders among those with no degrees.

Figure 6.1: Prevalence of professional certifications or licenses, postsecondary certificates, and work experience programs among those with no degrees, those with degrees, and the survey population



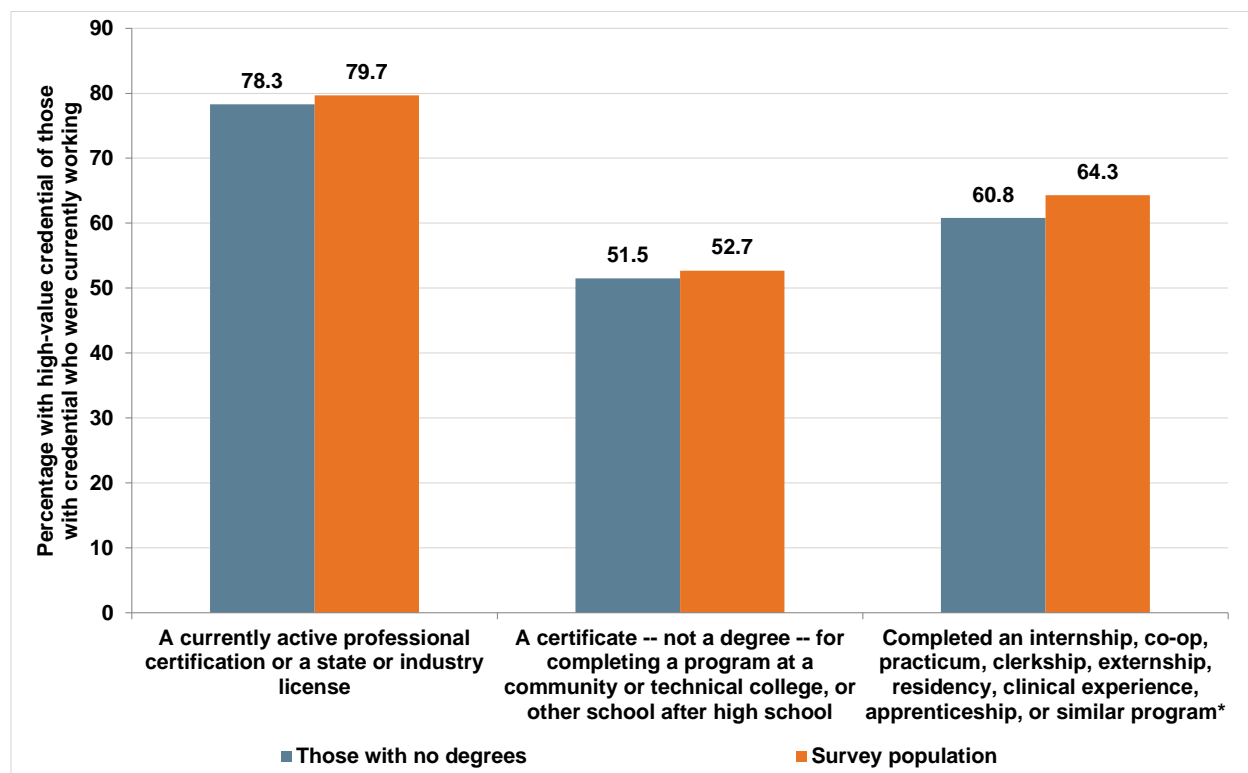
Note: *A small percentage (less than one percent) who reported they were currently in a work experience program were excluded from the graph.

require certification or licensure. They had a slightly lower rate of earning postsecondary certificates than their non-degreed counterparts (17 percent versus 21 percent). Overall, then, the group of respondents with no degrees had lower certification/licensure rates and much lower work experience program completion rates, but earned postsecondary certificates at the same rate as the general population.

Defining High-Value Work-Related Credentials

As stated previously, high-value work-related credentials were defined as those that enabled the holder to work in a related field, directly or indirectly. Among individuals with no degrees who had work-related credentials, the percentages with high-value credentials for the three types of credentials were quite high (Figure 6.2) and compare favorably with those in the overall population of credential holders.

Figure 6.2: Percentage holding high-value credentials among those with credential who were currently working—those with no degrees and the survey population



Note: *A small percentage (less than one percent) who reported they were currently in a work experience program were excluded from the graph.

- Close to four-fifths (78 percent) of those with no degrees but with a professional certification or license reported working in a related field compared with 72 percent in the overall group of certification/license holders.
- The percentages of high-value postsecondary certificates among the group with no degrees and in the overall population of certificate holders were similar (52 percent and 53 percent, respectively).
- Sixty-one percent of those who had completed a work experience program reported working in a related field, a little lower than the 64 percent we reported earlier among all those who had completed a work experience program.

Among the group with no degrees, 11 percent had a high-value professional certification/industry license, 8 percent had a high-value postsecondary certificate, and 6 percent had completed a work experience program that enabled them directly or indirectly to work in a related field. With the exception of those with postsecondary certificates, these percentages were lower than in the overall survey population (18 percent, 8 percent, and 15 percent for the three types of work-related credentials respectively).

Reported Usefulness of Work-Related Credentials in Employment-Related Outcomes

We looked at perceptions of the usefulness of work-related credentials among those with no degrees and who were currently working. Tables 6.4-6.6 present the responses for the three different types of work-related credentials. The patterns are very similar to what we had seen earlier with respect to the overall groups with work-related credentials. In each case, those with high-value credentials (working in a related field) were much more positive about the usefulness of the credential in terms of getting or keeping a job, improving work skills, and keeping them marketable to employers and clients. Like the general population of credential holders, somewhat lower percentages rated either the postsecondary certificate or the work experience program as “very useful” in increasing their pay than on other dimensions related to the job.

Table 6.4: Reported usefulness of professional certification/ licenses by whether respondent’s current job is related to the professional certification/license among those with no degrees who were currently employed

	Percentage of those with a professional certification or state or industry license* and currently employed		
	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
Getting a job			
Current job somewhat or very related to professional certification/license	9.2	13.1	77.7
Current job not related to professional certification/license	26.0	32.2	41.8
Keeping a job			
Current job somewhat or very related to professional certification/license	7.7	13.0	79.3
Current job not related to professional certification/license	35.6	14.9	49.5
Keeping you marketable to employers and clients			
Current job somewhat or very related to professional certification/license	2.9	15.7	81.4
Current job not related to professional certification/license	22.0	27.7	50.4
Improving your work skills			
Current job somewhat or very related to professional certification/license	7.2	24.9	67.9
Current job not related to professional certification/license	22.1	31.1	46.9

Note. *Table omits the “too soon to tell” response, which typically comprises less than four percent of responses.

Table 6.5: Reported usefulness of postsecondary certificates by whether respondent’s current job is related to postsecondary certificate among those with no degrees and currently employed

	Percentage of those with postsecondary certificates* and currently employed		
	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
Getting a job			
Current job somewhat or very related to postsecondary certificate	8.0	23.5	68.5
Current job not related to postsecondary certificate	51.0	29.2	19.8
Increasing your pay			
Current job somewhat or very related to postsecondary certificate	17.6	30.8	51.7
Current job not related to postsecondary certificate	58.0	22.6	19.4
Improving your work skills			
Current job somewhat or very related to postsecondary certificate	2.8	20.1	77.1
Current job not related to postsecondary certificate	35.3	34.7	30.0

Note. *Table omits the “too soon to tell” response, which typically comprises less than four percent of responses.

Table 6.6: Reported usefulness of work experience programs by whether respondent’s current job is related to the work experience program among those with no degrees and currently employed

	Percentage of those who had completed a work experience program* and currently employed		
	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
Getting a job			
Current job somewhat or very related to work-related credential	6.0	15.3	78.8
Current job not related to work-related credential	41.3	29.0	29.7
Increasing your pay			
Current job somewhat or very related to work-related credential	8.4	24.9	66.7
Current job not related to work-related credential	43.2	29.4	27.5
Improving your work skills			
Current job somewhat or very related to work-related credential	0.5	20.0	79.5
Current job not related to work-related credential	26.0	29.9	44.2

Note. *Table omits the “too soon to tell” response, which typically comprises less than four percent of responses.

Earnings of Full-Time Workers with and without Work-Related Credentials

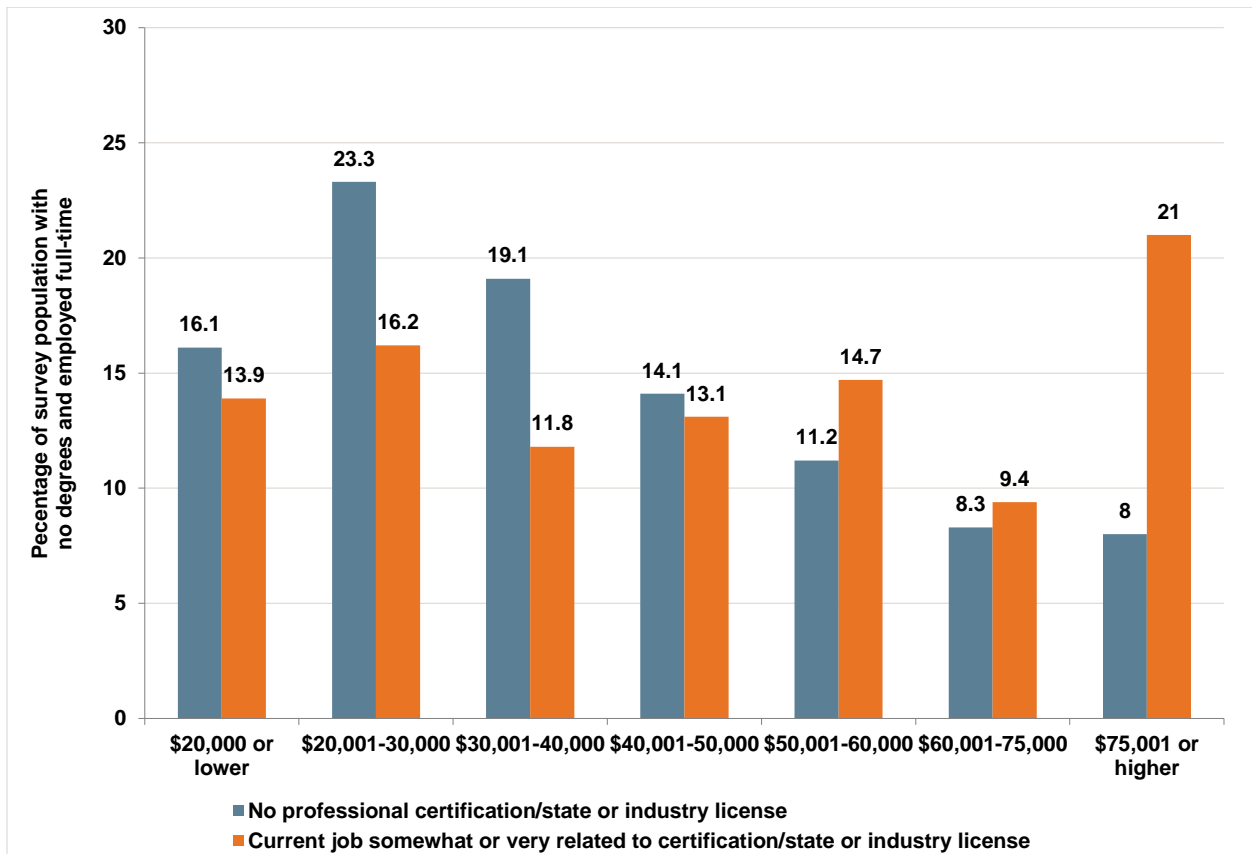
Figures 6.3-6.5 present data on earnings of full-time workers with and without work-related credentials. In some cases, the sample size did not allow us to look separately at those with work-related credentials who were working out of field. In these cases, we compared those without the work-related credential to those with high-value credentials.

Compared with those who did not have a professional certification/license, having a high-value certification/license is associated with markedly higher incomes. For example, while 16 percent of the former group reported incomes of over \$60,000, this was true of over 30 percent of those possessing a high-value credential (Figure 6.3). The median income ranges were \$30,001-\$40,000 and \$40,001-\$50,000 respectively.

With respect to postsecondary certificates, those with a high-value credential earned markedly higher incomes than those with a credential who were working out of field and those without a postsecondary certificate (Figure 6.4). For example, 31 percent of those working in field earned over \$60,000 compared with 17 percent of those without a certificate and only 7 percent of those with a certificate working out of field. The median income range was \$40,001-\$50,000 for those with a high-value certificate compared with \$30,001-\$40,000 for the other two groups.

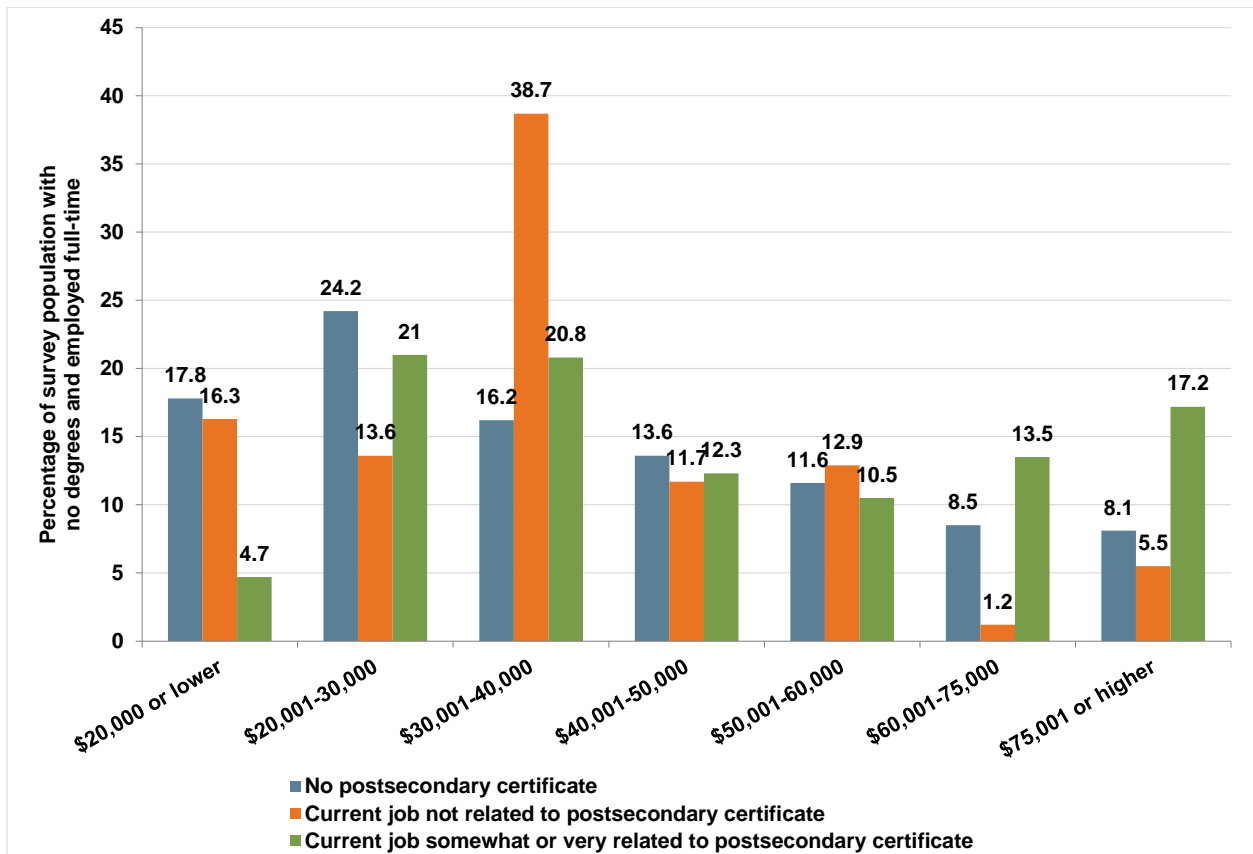
The pattern with respect to a work experience program is somewhat different (Figure 6.5). The distribution of income, with the exception of the tail ends of the distribution, for those working in field and those without the credential, are reasonably similar and the median income range for both groups was \$30,001-\$40,000. However, a higher proportion of those without the work experience program earned \$20,000 or less compared with those who were working in field (16 percent versus 6 percent) and the reverse was true of the proportion earning over \$75,000 (10 percent versus 19 percent).

Figure 6.3: Earnings* from all jobs over the past 12 months by whether respondent had a professional certification/state or industry license and was working in a related field, among those with no degrees and employed full-time



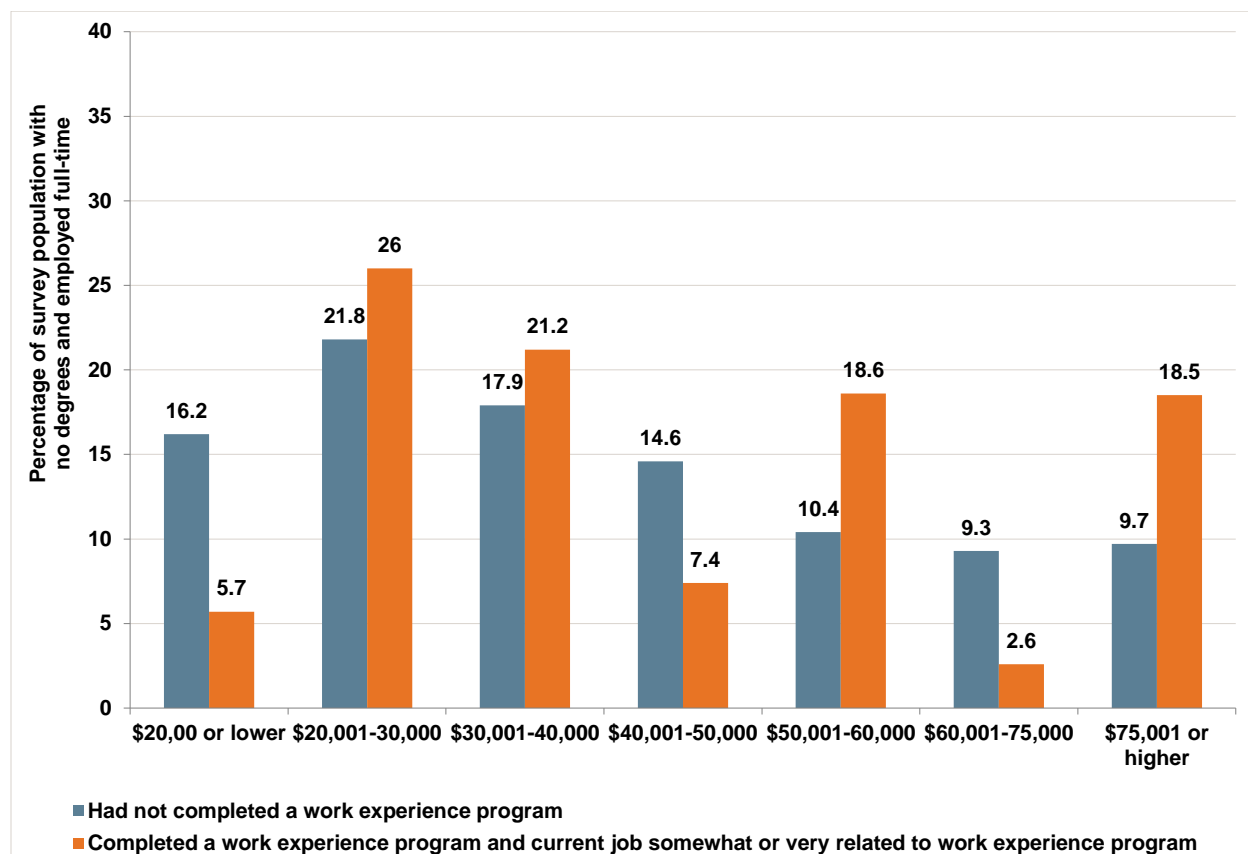
Note: *Includes wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, and tips.

Figure 6.4: Earnings* from all jobs over the past 12 months by whether respondent had a postsecondary certificate and was working in a related field, among those with no degrees and employed full-time



Note: *Includes wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, and tips.

Figure 6.5: Earnings* from all jobs over the past 12 months by whether respondent had completed a work experience program and was working in a related field, among those with no degrees and employed full-time



Note: *Includes wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, and tips.

Estimating Percentage of Survey Population with No Degrees but Holding High-Value Postsecondary Certificates

Believing that postsecondary learning is the key to meeting the nation’s growing need for talent, the Lumina Foundation asked NORC to estimate the percentage of the survey population—the working age population—that did not have degrees but had earned postsecondary credentials that appeared to have high value in the labor market. We estimated that the weighted percentage of individuals without a degree who hold a high-value postsecondary certificate represented approximately 4.3 percent of the survey population.

7. Conclusions

The National Education and Employment Survey

The purpose of the National Education and Employment Survey (NEES) discussed in this report was to determine the percentage of adults in America who hold a “high-quality” postsecondary certificate, license, or certification as their highest credential, where “high-quality” was defined by whether the holder of the postsecondary credential was working in a related field.⁹ Two waves of data collection were undertaken in 2016—Wave 1 was conducted in January-February 2016 and Wave 2 was conducted in October-November 2016. The total sample size for Wave 1 was 9,539 and the total number of completed surveys was 1,890. The total sample size for Wave 2 was 4,935 and the total number of completes was 1,998. African Americans and Hispanics were oversampled in both waves. The analyses reported here are based on the combined data (3,888 completes), weighted to represent the survey population.

Overall, the age range of the survey population was between 25 and 64 years old. About 17 percent of the population identified themselves as of Hispanic origin and 14 percent were African American. The population was evenly divided between male and female. In terms of educational attainment, about two-thirds of the survey population had a sub-baccalaureate education while 56 percent had no degrees. About two-thirds (64 percent) of the population was employed and over half (54 percent) were employed full-time. Close to 30 percent (28 percent) were not working and not looking for work.

As noted in the Introduction, the data reported here are simple weighted cross-tabulations. Overall, this is a descriptive report, providing a look at the prevalence of postsecondary credentials and employment-related outcomes, based on two rounds of data collected in 2016.

Main Findings

Prevalence of Professional Certifications/State or Industry Licenses, Postsecondary Certificates, and Work Experience Programs

- About one-quarter of the survey population had a currently active professional certification or state or industry license. A little under one-fifth (19 percent) had earned a postsecondary certificate. Another 27 percent reported that they had completed a work experience program.

⁹ We use the term “high-value”—a term that other studies have used to indicate value in the labor market—interchangeably with “high-quality” in this report.

- There was little difference in the percentage of certification/license holders by race, ethnicity, or gender. Hispanics were somewhat more likely than non-Hispanics to earn postsecondary certificates (22 percent versus 19 percent) and African Americans were much more likely to earn postsecondary certificates compared with whites (29 percent versus 18 percent). There were no differences by race and ethnicity among those who had and had completed a work experience program. However, while just under a third (31 percent) of women in the survey population reported having completed a work experience program, this was true of only 23 percent of men.

High-Value Credentials

- Among those with a professional certification/industry license, about 80 percent of those with certifications/licenses said their most important certification or license was for their current job. There was little difference in terms of race, ethnicity, or gender, in the proportion that had high-value certifications/licenses.
- Over half (53 percent) of those with a postsecondary certificate were working in fields somewhat or very related to the postsecondary certificate. The percentage of Hispanics who were working in a related field tended to be somewhat higher than the percentage of non-Hispanics (57 percent versus 52 percent) while the reverse was true of African Americans compared to whites (49 percent versus 53 percent).
- A little under two-thirds (64 percent) of those who had completed a work experience program were currently working in a field somewhat or very related to the program. Among this currently employed group, there was little difference in the percentage that had completed a high-value work experience program by race or ethnicity. However, a higher percentage of men than women were working in a field related to their work experience program (68 percent versus 61 percent).
- Overall, among the survey population, 18 percent held high-value professional certifications/industry licenses, 8 percent had earned high-value postsecondary certificates, and 15 percent had completed a high-value work experience program—credentials that enabled them to work directly or indirectly in related fields.

Reported Usefulness of Work-Related Credentials in Employment-Related Outcomes

- Not surprisingly, respondents with work-related credentials working in a related field rated the credential much more highly in terms of usefulness with respect to various employment-related outcomes (such as getting and keeping a job, improving work skills, keeping them marketable to employers or clients). However, even those working out of field tended to value the credential in getting a job, keeping them marketable to employers or clients, or improving work skills. Not

surprisingly, we see some large differences in the reported usefulness of the program in terms of increasing pay between those working in a related field and their counterparts working out of field.

- We also examined differences in perceived usefulness of certification and licenses among current holders by ethnicity, race, and gender among those holding high-value certifications/licenses. Overall, with some exceptions, Hispanics, African Americans, and women holding high-value credentials tended to rate the certification/license somewhat more highly in terms of the workplace than their counterparts. However, women were somewhat less sanguine than men in their perceptions of the usefulness of the work experience program, particularly with regard to effect on pay. For example, only 42 percent of women rated the program as “very useful” in increasing pay compared with 54 percent of men.

Earnings of Full-Time Workers with and without Work-Related Credentials

- In general, among full-time workers, working in a related field was clearly associated with higher income compared with either those who were working out of field or those who did possess work-related credentials. The differences were more pronounced at the tail ends of the income distribution.

The Non-Degreed Survey Population: Characteristics and Experiences

- Fifty-six percent of the survey population did not have degrees. A higher percentage of Hispanics than non-Hispanics did not have degrees: 66 percent versus 54 percent. This was true of African Americans compared to whites (63 percent versus 54 percent). In terms of employment status, less than half (43 percent) of those with no degrees were employed full-time
- About 16 percent had a professional certification or state or industry license while 20 percent had a postsecondary credential. Only 13 percent had completed a work experience program.
- Among individuals with no degrees who had work-related credentials and were currently working, the percentages with high-value credentials for the three types of credentials were quite high, close to or higher than in the overall population.
- Overall, among those with no degrees, 11 percent of respondents had high-value professional certifications/state or industry licenses; 8 percent had high-value postsecondary certificates; and 6 percent had completed a high-value work experience program.
- Like the general population of credential holders, those working in field rated the credential much more highly than those working out of field in terms of employment-related outcomes. Like the general population of credential holders, somewhat lower percentages rated either the postsecondary

certificate or the work experience program as “very useful” in increasing their pay than on other dimensions related to the job.

- As with the general population, compared with those who did not have work-related credentials or were working out of field, having a high-value work-related credential was associated with markedly higher incomes.

Percentage of the Survey Population without a Degree and a High-Value Postsecondary Certificate

The Lumina Foundation is currently focusing on postsecondary certificates. We estimated that the weighted percentage of individuals without a degree who hold a high-value postsecondary certificate represented approximately 4.3 percent of the survey population.

Final Thoughts

Overall, it appears that technical training and education offers high value to participants in that it enables a substantial number of credential holders to work in related fields directly or indirectly and this seems to be associated with higher earnings. African Americans, in particular, appear to seek out these credentials to a higher degree than their counterparts. Working in related fields appears to be positively related to earnings, providing a gateway to middle-income jobs.

We offer three recommendations for future research:

- Given Lumina’s interest in the group with no degrees, the next phase of the study should focus on this group in particular. Interviews and focus groups with individuals would help us understand the barriers and challenges they face in terms of getting high-value work-related credentials. A set of interviews with programs offering these work-related credentials could help identify components of programs that better position the credential holder to succeed. Data from these interviews could help inform future survey questions and responses, as well as help Lumina design effective interventions to remove barriers if they exist (e.g., promote better counseling and advising).
- Conduct longitudinal studies that follow cohorts of youth over time.
- Leverage national databases that offer a rich set of cognitive and psychosocial variables with which to address questions of interest.

Appendix A

The National Education and Employment Survey

Education	
<p>1. (Q1) What is the highest degree or level of school you have <u>completed</u>?</p> <p>Mark <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ONE Only.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Elementary or high school, but no high school diploma or GED® <input type="checkbox"/> (2) High school diploma <input type="checkbox"/> (3) GED® or alternative high school Credential <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Some college credit but less than one year of college credit <input type="checkbox"/> (5) 1 or more years of college credit, no degree <input type="checkbox"/> (6) Associate's degree (for example, AA, AS) <input type="checkbox"/> (7) Bachelor's degree (for example, BA, BS) <input type="checkbox"/> (8) Master's degree (for example, MA, MS, MEng, MEd, MSW, MBA) <input type="checkbox"/> (9) Professional degree beyond a bachelor's degree (for example, MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD) <input type="checkbox"/> (10) Doctorate degree (for example, PhD, EdD) 	<p>2. (Q2) Which <u>one</u> of the following best describes the field of study for the highest level of school you have completed?</p> <p>Mark <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ONE only.</p> <p><i>If there was more than one, please choose the one you consider most important.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> (1) General studies, no major, or undeclared major <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Accounting, finance, insurance, or real estate <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Administrative support <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> (5) Audio, broadcasting, multimedia, or graphic technologies <input type="checkbox"/> (6) Business management, administration, or marketing <input type="checkbox"/> (7) Communications or journalism <input type="checkbox"/> (8) Computer science or information technology <input type="checkbox"/> (9) Construction, repair, manufacturing, or transportation <input type="checkbox"/> (10) Cosmetology <input type="checkbox"/> (11) Education <input type="checkbox"/> (12) Engineering or architecture <input type="checkbox"/> (13) English language or literature <input type="checkbox"/> (14) Fine arts or music <input type="checkbox"/> (15) Healthcare <input type="checkbox"/> (16) Law or legal studies <input type="checkbox"/> (17) Law enforcement, security, or firefighting <input type="checkbox"/> (18) Liberal arts <input type="checkbox"/> (19) Psychology <input type="checkbox"/> (20) Religious vocations or theology <input type="checkbox"/> (21) Science or mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> (22) Social or human services or public administration <input type="checkbox"/> (23) Social sciences, political science, economics, or history <input type="checkbox"/> (24) Other — Specify: <input style="width: 100px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>

3. **(Q3) Are you currently enrolled at a college, university, technical or trade school, or other school?**

- (1) No
- (2) Yes, as a part-time student
- (3) Yes, as a full-time student

4. **(Q4) Have you taken any classes to learn English as a second language, sometimes called ESL or ESOL classes?**

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

Certifications and Licenses

5. **(Q5) Do you have a currently active professional certification or a state or industry license? Do not include business licenses, such as a liquor license or vending license.**

A professional certification or license shows you are qualified to perform a specific job and includes things like Licensed Realtor, Certified Medical Assistant, Certified Teacher, or an IT certification.

- (1) No → **GO TO question 15**
- (2) Yes

6. **(Q6) If yes, how many currently active certifications and licenses do you have?**

If you had to get a certification in order to get a license, count each certification and license separately.

	number of certifications and licenses
--	---------------------------------------

7. **(Q7) The next few questions ask about the certification and license that you consider to be your most important. What is the name of your most important certification or license?**

(1)

8. **(Q8) What kind of work is your most important certification or license for?**

(1)

9. **(Q9) Is your most important certification or license required by a federal, state, or local government agency (such as a state board) in order to do that kind of work?**

- (1) No
- (2) Yes
- (77) Don't know

10. **(Q10) Can your most important certification or license be revoked or suspended for any reason?**

- (1) No
- (2) Yes
- (77) Don't know

11. **(Q11) In what year did you first get your most important certification or license?**

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12. **Did you prepare for getting your most important certification or license by...**

Mark ONE box for EACH ITEM below.

- | | (1)
No
▼ | (2)
Yes
▼ |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. (Q12_1) taking classes from a college, technical school, or trade school? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. (Q12_2) taking classes or training from a company, association, union, or private instructor? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. (Q12_3) Studying on your own using textbooks or online resources? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

13. **(Q13) Is your most important certification or license for your current job?**

- (1) Not applicable, not currently working
- (2) No
- (3) Yes

14. How useful has your most important certification or license been for each of the following?

a. (14_1) Getting a job

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

b. (14_2) Keeping a job

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

c. (14_3) Keeping you marketable to employers or clients

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

d. (14_4) Improving your work skills

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

Certificates

15. People sometimes earn certificates from an education or training program. These are different from certifications or licenses. Do not include certifications or licenses here. Have you ever earned any of the following types of certificates?

a. (Q15_1) A certificate for completing a training program from an employer, employment agency, union, software or equipment manufacturer, or other training provider

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

b. (Q15_2) A certificate for completing a vocational program at a high school

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

c. (Q15_3) A high school equivalency certificate, such as a GED®

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

d. (Q15_4) A certificate—not a degree—for completing a program at a community or technical college, or other school after high school. Do not include teaching certificates or college degrees

- (1) No → **GO TO question 24**
- (2) Yes

16. (Q16) We will refer to the certificates in question 15d as “post-secondary certificates.” What was the field of study for your last post-secondary certificate?

Mark ONE only.

- (1) Accounting, finance, insurance, or real estate
- (2) Administrative support
- (3) Agriculture
- (4) Audio, broadcasting, multimedia, or graphic technologies
- (5) Business management, administration, or marketing
- (6) Computer science or information technology
- (7) Construction trades
- (8) Cosmetology
- (9) Culinary arts
- (10) Education
- (11) Engineering technologies or drafting
- (12) Fine arts or music
- (13) Funeral service or mortuary science
- (14) Healthcare
- (15) Law enforcement, security, or firefighting
- (16) Law or legal studies
- (17) Liberal arts
- (18) Manufacturing or production (for example machinist, welder, boilermaker)
- (19) Mechanic or repair technologies
- (20) Transportation
- (21) Other — Specify:

17. (Q17) Who gave you your last post-secondary certificate?

Mark ONE only.

- (1) A community college
- (2) A vocational, technical, trade, or business school
- (3) Another college or university
- (4) Someplace else — Specify:

18. (Q18) About how many hours of instruction did you complete in order to earn your last post-secondary certificate?

- (1) 960 hours (1 full-time school year) or more
- (2) 480 hours (half a full-time school year) to 959 hours
- (3) 160 to 479 hours
- (4) 40-159 hours
- (5) Less than 40 hours

19. (Q19) Which one of the following was required for enrolling in your last post-secondary certificate program?

Mark ONE only.

- (1) Being enrolled in or having completed an advanced degree program (Master’s or higher)
- (2) Being enrolled in or having completed a Bachelor’s degree program
- (3) Having completed high school or a high school equivalency (such as a GED®)
- (4) None of the above

20. (Q20) To earn your last post-secondary certificate did you have to complete...

Mark ONE box for EACH ITEM below.

(1) (2)
No Yes
▼ ▼

- a. (20_1) a minimum number of credits?
- b. (20_2) a minimum number of instructional hours?

21. (Q21) Was your last post-secondary certificate part of the training you took for a professional certification or license?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

22. (Q22) Is your current job related to your last post-secondary certificate?

- (1) Not applicable, not currently working
- (2) No
- (3) Yes, somewhat related
- (4) Yes, very related

23. How useful has your last post-secondary certificate been for each of the following?

a. (Q23_1) Getting a job

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

b. (Q23_2) Increasing your pay

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

c. (Q23_3) Improving your work skills

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

Work Experience Programs

24. (Q24) Have you ever completed an internship, co-op, practicum, clerkship, externship, residency, clinical experience, apprenticeship, or similar program?

- (1) No, and I am not in one now
- (2) No, but I am in one now
- (3) Yes, I have completed this type of program

GO TO question 35

We will refer to these as "work experience programs." If you have NOT completed a work experience program, go to question 35. If you HAVE completed a program, continue on the next page, answering for the last work experience program you completed.

25. (Q25) If yes, what type of work was your last work experience program for?

Mark ONE only.

Building or construction trades:

- (1) Carpenter
- (2) Electrician
- (3) Plumber or pipefitter
- (4) Sheet metal worker or structural steel worker
- (5) Other building and construction trades

Healthcare:

- (6) Medical doctor
- (7) Nursing or nursing assistant
- (8) Other healthcare

Other types of work:

- (9) Accounting, finance, insurance, or real estate
- (10) Chef, cook, or food preparation
- (11) Computer networking or information technology
- (12) Cosmetology
- (13) Driving, piloting, or other transportation
- (14) Engineering or architecture
- (15) Funeral service or mortuary science
- (16) Law enforcement, security, or firefighting
- (17) Legal practice
- (18) Machinist or tool and die maker
- (19) Management or administration
- (20) Mechanic or repair work
- (21) Printing
- (22) Social work, counseling, or religious vocations
- (23) Teaching
- (24) Utility or telecommunications technician
- (25) Other — Specify:

26. (Q26) How long did your last work experience program last?

- (1) Less than 3 months
- (2) 3 months to less than 6 months
- (3) 6 months to less than 1 year
- (4) 1 year to less than 2 years
- (5) 2 years to less than 3 years
- (6) 3 years or more

27. (Q27) What wage did you earn as part of your last work experience program?

- (1) No wage
- (2) A training wage that was lower than the wage of a fully qualified worker
- (3) The same wage as a fully qualified worker

28. As a part of your last work experience program did you...

Mark ONE box for EACH ITEM below.

- | | (1)
No
▼ | (2)
Yes
▼ |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. (Q28_1) have instruction or training from a co-worker or supervisor? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. (Q28_2) take classes from a college, technical school, or trade school? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. (Q28_3) take classes or training from a company, association, union, or private instructor? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

29. Do the following statements describe your last work experience program?

Mark ONE box for EACH ITEM below.

- | | (1)
No
▼ | (2)
Yes
▼ |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. (Q29_1) I was evaluated by a co-worker or supervisor..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. (Q29_2) I got college credit | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. (Q29_3) I received journeyman status at the end of an apprenticeship..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. (Q29_4) I got a state or federal apprenticeship number..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

30. (Q30) Which one of the following best describes your last work experience program?

Mark ONE only.

- (1) It was not part of a formal education program
- (2) It was part of a high school program
- (3) It was part of a school program after high school and below an Associate's degree
- (4) It was part of an Associate's degree program
- (5) It was part of a Bachelor's degree program
- (6) It was part of an advanced degree program or other program beyond a Bachelor's degree

31. (Q31) Did (or will) your last work experience program help you earn a professional certification or license?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

32. (Q32) Is your current job related to your last work experience program?

- (1) Not applicable, not currently working
- (2) No
- (3) Yes, somewhat related
- (4) Yes, very related

33. (Q33) In your current job, how often do you use the skills or knowledge that you learned during your last work experience program?

- (1) Not applicable, not currently working
- (2) Never or almost never
- (3) Sometimes
- (4) All or most of the time

34. How useful was your last work experience program for each of the following?

a. (Q34_1) Getting a job

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

b. (Q34_2) Increasing your pay

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

c. (Q34_3) Improving your work skills

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

Employment

35. (Q35) Last week, were you employed for pay at a job or business?

If you were temporarily absent from a job or business (on vacation, temporarily ill, on maternity leave, etc.), answer "Yes".

- (1) No → **GO TO question 40**
- (2) Yes

36. (Q36) Last week, how many jobs did you have?

number of jobs

37. (Q37) Last week, did you work at a full-time job (a job where you work 35 hours or more per week)?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

38. (Q38) Last week, did you work at a part-time job (a job where you work fewer than 35 hours per week)?

(1) No → **GO TO question 44**

(2) Yes

39. (Q39) If yes, would you have preferred for your part-time job to be a full-time job?

(1) No } **GO TO question 44**

(2) Yes }

40. (Q40) Last week, were you on layoff from a job?

(1) No

(2) Yes

41. (Q41) During the last 4 weeks, have you been actively looking for work?

(1) No

(2) Yes → **GO TO question 43**

42. (Q42) If no, do you intend to look for work within the next 5 years?

(1) No

(2) Yes

(77) Don't know

43. (Q43) When did you last work, even for a few days?

(1) Never worked for pay → **GO TO question 53**

(2) Over 12 months ago → **GO TO question 47**

(3) Within the past 12 months

44. (Q44) During the past 12 months (52 weeks), how many weeks did you work, including paid vacation, paid sick leave, and military service?

(1) 50 to 52 weeks

(2) 48 to 49 weeks

(3) 40 to 47 weeks

(4) 27 to 39 weeks

(5) 14 to 26 weeks

(6) 13 weeks or less

45. (Q45) During the past 12 months, in the weeks you worked, how many hours did you usually work each WEEK?

usual hours worked each WEEK

46. (Q46) Which category best fits your earnings from wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, or tips, from all jobs over the past 12 months?

Report amount before deductions for taxes, bonds, dues, or other items.

(1) \$0 to \$10,000

(2) \$10,001 to \$20,000

(3) \$20,001 to \$30,000

(4) \$30,001 to \$40,000

(5) \$40,001 to \$50,000

(6) \$50,001 to \$60,000

(7) \$60,001 to \$75,000

(8) \$75,001 to \$150,000

(9) \$150,001 or more

47. (Q47) The next few questions ask about your current or last job. If you had more than one job, describe the one at which you worked the most hours. In your current or last job, for whom did you work?

(Q47_CHECK)(1) *If now on active duty in the Armed Forces, mark (X) this box and print the branch of the Armed Forces below.*

Name of company, business, or other employer

(00) Please specify:

48. (Q48) What kind of business or industry was this?

(For example: hospital, newspaper publishing, mail order house, auto engine manufacturing, bank)

(1)

49. (Q49) Which one of the following were you?

- (1) An employee of a private company, business, or individual, for wages, salary, or commission
- (2) A local (city, county, etc.), state, or federal government employee
- (3) Self-employed in own business, professional practice, or farm
- (4) Working without pay for family business or farm

50. (Q50) Did you have a license that was required by a federal, state, or local government agency to do this job?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

51. (Q51) What kind of position did you hold?

- (1) Permanent → **GO TO question 53**
- (2) Temporary

52. (Q52) Would you have preferred to work at a permanent job?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

Background

53. (Q53) Have you ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard?

- (1) No, never served in the military
- (2) Yes, but only on active duty for training in the Reserve or National Guard
- (3) Yes, on active duty now or in past

54. (Q54) Are you male or female?

- (1) Male
- (2) Female
- (3) Other Specified

55. (Q55) What is your current marital status?

Mark ONE only.

- (1) Now Married → **GO TO question 57**
- (2) Widowed
- (3) Divorced
- (4) Separated
- (5) Never married

56. (Q56) Are you currently living with a boyfriend/girlfriend or partner in this household?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

57. (Q57) Do you speak a language other than English at home?

- (1) No → **GO TO question 59**
- (2) Yes

58. (Q58) How well do you speak English?

- (1) Very well
- (2) Well
- (3) Not well
- (4) Not at all

59. (Q59) How old are you?

years old

60. (Q60) Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

61. (Q61) What is your race? You may mark one or more races.

- (1) American Indian or Alaska Native
- (2) Asian
- (3) Black or African American
- (4) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- (5) White

62. (Q62) Do you have Internet access at home on a computer or tablet?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes