



and the University of Arizona. According to the report, median annual earnings for an Arizonan with a graduate degree were \$60,884, while those with a high school diploma saw median earnings of \$49,801. By contrast, Arizonans with some college, but no degree, had median earnings of \$33,632. Those with a high school diploma had median annual earnings of \$27,947.

Higher education matters more today in Arizona with the earnings gap widening in recent years. A person with a graduate degree earned a median wage that is 70 percent more than someone with a high school diploma. The difference has now increased to 78 percent, according to the 2016 report.

The report details careers that earn the highest median wages with engineering at the top followed by health and related occupation and business, management and marketing. Median earnings range from \$86,443 for those with an engineering major to \$40,281 for those with a major in area such as ethnic, cultural and gender studies.

The report shows that the marketplace does not reward all degrees equally, but this report makes clear that on the whole, higher education is worth the investment. The board will continue to work to ensure a good return on investment for students and the state. We will continue to work to ensure that every qualified student in Arizona is able to access higher education to meet workforce needs.

Data for the report was culled from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey.

The board also released this week the 2015-16 [High School Report Card](#), demonstrating improved academic preparedness among university freshmen who graduated a year earlier from an Arizona high school. The report shows that approximately 87 percent of students attending an Arizona public university were admitted without academic deficiencies; that compares to 84 percent in fall 2014 and 80 percent in fall 2011. The first-year GPAs among these students were slightly higher averaging 3.0 for the 2015-16 college freshman class compared to 2.9 for each freshman class in the past five years.

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