

education. Today we live in a credential conscious society. This means that opportunities for employment are often closed off to those without a college degree or other specialized postsecondary training. A college degree is a portable and transferrable credential, meaning that it goes with the individual. A college credential is also universally recognized. These facts provide degree holders a measure of mobility and security in an uncertain labor market.

Employers recognize two important facts about college graduates, namely they can follow directions and are persistent enough to work toward a worthwhile goal for an extended period of time. As such, employers will almost always favor college educated individuals to interview and ultimately hire.

To outline and summarize, the benefits of a college education are:

- increased employment potential
- increased annual and lifetime earning potential
- increased job satisfaction
- better fringe benefits
- longer average lifespan
- career mobility

For more information or assistance call Adriana Mendez, Recruitment Coordinator on the Elko Campus at 775.753.2201

The titles of all eight brochures are listed below:

1. *The Benefits of a College Education*
2. *Picking the Right College and Getting Admitted*
3. *Types of Post-secondary Programs and Degrees* (length and purpose of each credential)
4. *The Cost of College and Paying For It* (tuition, fees, books, living expenses and all forms of financial aid)
5. *College Course Basics* (semesters, course construction, outlines, syllabi and definitions)
6. *College Enrollment* (registration for classes, drops and adds and withdrawals)
7. *How to Study and The Difference Between High School and College*

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**GBC**  
**College**  
**Knowledge**

**1**

**The Benefits  
of a  
College  
Education**

Articles written by:  
Dr. Mark A. Curtis, President  
Great Basin College, 2013

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This brochure describes the benefits of a college education. The brochure is the first in a series of eight brochures that will provide readers information about many important aspects of college.

For some years now we have been hearing about the importance of a college education. Because of the changing nature of jobs in the U.S., their increasing complexity, globalization, and competition for those jobs, there has been a nationwide push to increase the number of college graduates in every state. As of the 2010 census, 28.4% of Nevada residents and 39.3% of the adult population nationwide had an Associate Degree (i.e., two years of college) or more. This leaves a majority of the population wanting and often needing information to help them make an informed decision about going to college.

When considering college, two questions that often come to mind relate to employment. Specifically: Can I get a job when I am finished and what will it pay? A college degree increases the likelihood of being employed while providing better wages on average than those without any college. Information from the year 2012 shows that the chances of being unemployed goes down dramatically with more education (see Table 1).

Often jobs with better pay have better benefits like paid vacations, holidays, life and medical insurance, training and other quality of work-life factors. When higher pay is combined with generous benefits, job satisfaction generally goes up as well. In a 2008 Harvard Medical School study, college graduates were found to live an average of seven years longer than their non-college counterparts. This may be due in part to better pay and benefits, and also takes into account job satisfaction, type of work, and lifestyle choices.

Certainly it is possible to be successful without a post-secondary credential. Bill Gates, consistently among the richest people in the world, dropped out of college before completing a degree to start Microsoft. Additionally, one of the greatest inventors in world history, Thomas Edison, was mostly home schooled and self-taught. However, the odds for personal success clearly favor those who go to college and complete a specified program of study.

It would seem the primary reason for attending college might be increased pay. However, getting hired in the first place is often dependent on an individual's level of

**TABLE 1. Education Level and Unemployment**

Level of Education Achieved	2012 Unemployment Percentages
Less than High School	12.2%
High School Graduate with no college	8.1%
Some college or an Associate Degree	6.5%
Bachelor's Degree or more	3.8%

United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics

The 2010 Census gathered information on average annual earnings by level of education. That information clearly shows that more education means significantly more pay (see Table 2).

**TABLE 2. Education Level and Earnings**

Level of Education Achieved	Average Annual Earnings	Hourly Wage (Based on 2080 hours per year)	Lifetime Earnings (based on a 40 year work life)
Less than High School	\$22,724	\$10.93	\$908,960
High School Graduate, no college	\$34,960	\$16.81	\$1,398,400
Some College	\$39,915	\$19.20	\$1,596,600
Associate Degree	\$44,025	\$21.17	\$1,761,000
Bachelor's Degree	\$55,590	\$26.73	\$2,227,600
Master's Degree	\$70,030	\$33.67	\$2,800,200
Doctor's Degree	\$89,308	\$42.94	\$3,572,360
Professional Degree (e.g., Medical Doctor, Pharmacist, or Lawyer)	\$96,020	\$46.16	\$3,840,800

2010 Census.gov