



Equity in Economic Outcomes for Community College Baccalaureate Graduates

CCB DATA POINTS
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Community college baccalaureate (CCB) programs hold significant potential to increase economic gains for racially minoritized students and communities traditionally underserved by higher education, but economic outcomes vary by state and student population.

Community college baccalaureate (CCB) programs have the potential to improve economic outcomes, such as employment rates and annual wages, for their graduates. However, few studies have looked at such economic outcomes by student demographics despite the importance of this type of research.

One exception is a study in [Florida](#), in which the employment rates and wages of associate degree graduates were compared to CCB degree graduates in similar fields of study by race and ethnicity four quarters after graduation. The study sought to understand if economic outcomes are greater if students stay in school to get their bachelor's versus exiting with an associate degree. Results showed similar employment rates for the two groups, with a few modest exceptions. Specifically, the employment rates of Black baccalaureate graduates were three percentage points higher than their peers who earned associate degrees only. Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students had slightly lower employment rates than peers at both credential levels.

Table 1 describes the most recent wage information available (2020-2021) for graduates of CCB programs in two states, Florida and Washington, where CCBs have been offered for decades. In addition, new data on CCB graduate employment is included from Texas, where CCB programs are expanding. Research on these three states show Latine CCB graduates earn less than white CCB graduates, with employment rates for Texas and Washington CCB graduates being slightly higher than Florida. Black/African American CCB graduates in Florida earned the lowest wages of any racial group, with this group showing higher earnings in Washington and Texas. Also for Florida and Texas, male CCB graduates out-earned women by roughly \$3,000 to \$8,000 in annual earnings. The Black/African American graduate group from Texas was too small to include in this wage study.

Table 1: Annual Earnings for CCB Graduates by Demographics in Three States¹

States	Black	White	Latine	2 or More Races	Other or Not Reported	Male	Female	Pell	No Pell
Florida	52,500	58,880	59,864			59,928	56,900		
Texas		54,562	42,486		36,000	48,137	40,088	40,906	48,272
Washington	70,000	69,000	65,000	62,000	69,000				

In a separate study in [Washington](#), researchers compared CCB graduates to regional university graduates in the same six-digit Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code. They found that wages varied by race/ethnicity and program of study, but Black/African American students earned less in almost every case. Like in Florida and Texas, men out-earned women in every area of study except computer and information sciences.

In [California](#), Latine CCB graduates who were employed reported earning \$22,600 more per year than they did prior to starting their CCB program. They also reported higher rates of employment (94 percent) and employment in California (92 percent) relative to non-Latine CCB graduates (93 percent and 88 percent, respectively). Rates for employment in the same field as their CCB program were comparable (about 89 percent) between Latine and non-Latine CCB graduates.

¹ Data for Florida and Texas is wages three years after graduation, and data in Washington is annualized based on wages for 1-4 quarters after graduation.

When examining CCB economic outcomes by race/ethnicity and gender, a nuanced but unequal picture emerges. Employment outcomes vary by program of study, race/ethnicity, and state but seem especially unequal for female graduates. While these inequalities largely reflect the landscape nationwide, it is especially important that CCB degrees seek to rectify past inequities, as they serve a large population of students who have been underserved in traditional bachelor's degree education programs.

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