



## 2014 Skills for Jobs Report Summary

The second annual Colorado Skills for Jobs Report ties postsecondary completions to projected future workforce needs and puts Colorado on the leading edge of using data to inform broader discussions about degree programs and offerings at the state's public and private institutions. To create this report, the Colorado Department of Higher Education consulted with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and the Department of Regulatory Agencies to connect workforce and postsecondary data. The report also outlines national trends regarding postsecondary education and workforce needs, alongside Colorado-specific facts and figures.

### What's new

- Projections that look ahead to 2020.
- Easy-to-read stoplight graphic showing which careers with large projected openings are expected to have enough qualified employees in the future and which ones may not. (Table 1 on p. 11).

### Key findings

- Experts project that by 2020, 74 percent of jobs in Colorado will require postsecondary education/training.
- Colorado is ranked third nationally in terms of the percentage of jobs requiring postsecondary education or training for employment, thus highlighting the critical importance of increasing the number of credentials awarded.
- The state unemployment rate is considerably lower for people who have a postsecondary credential than for those who have a high school degree or less. This gap has continued to widen over the past decade.
- In 2012, public institutions in Colorado awarded 49,739 certificates and degrees, an 8.7 percent increase over the previous year. Since 2007, postsecondary completions have grown an average of 5.6 percent annually.
- Colorado is on track to meet program completion needs in most Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) professions. However, for certain STEM occupation categories, such as computer science, more credential completions will be needed in order to meet projected demand.
- Overall, Colorado is not on track to produce enough physicians to meet future healthcare needs. The state is likely meeting the demand for healthcare support and practitioners overall at the mid- and bachelor's degree level, such as medical assistants and registered nurses, but this does not take into account

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anticipated and pronounced shortages in some rural areas.

- For skilled trades, manufacturing and production occupation groups, there are likely too few completions for certain occupations within this category.
- As more jobs require higher levels of education in the years to come, Colorado will likely need to increase its postsecondary credential production by about 2 percent - or 1,000 additional credentials - annually.

## Recommendations

- State-level data rather than national-level data should be used to set state policy and to link workforce needs and educational pipelines.
- Strengthen data sharing relationships between Colorado's Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Education and Department of Higher Education.
- Develop effective career pathways.
- Continue to closely examine and address the supply-demand relationships of healthcare practitioners, as well as those of computer-related, financial and education professions.
- Continue to build strong industry-institution partnerships.
- Increase higher education success for the fastest growing demographic groups.
- Provide students and families with the tools and knowledge they need to make informed decisions.

## What's next

- A report focused specifically on STEM program completions and related occupations will be issued this year to examine the nuances that exist in supply-demand relationships.
- Region-specific briefs will be issued throughout 2014.

## Learn more

- [Read the full report.](#)
- For more information or to arrange an interview, contact Communications Officer Julie Poppen at [Julie.Poppen@dhe.state.co.us](mailto:Julie.Poppen@dhe.state.co.us).

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