

MY DEGREE COUNTS

Building our future through higher education

My Degree Counts Progress Report

Fall 2013

Center for Houston's Future



There is no silver bullet to growing our economy, but research shows there is one economic strategy that comes closest — college completion.

Dr. Noel Harmon

National Director of the Talent Dividend
CEOs for Cities



Who We Are

Center for Houston's Future works to solve our region's toughest problems by engaging diverse leaders, providing impactful research, and defining actionable strategies.

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Dear Colleagues,

Consistent with our mission of promoting Houston's economic competitiveness and sustainability, the Center for Houston's Future, with your help, launched My Degree Counts two years ago to bring the relatively low level of college attainment to the forefront of the region's concerns. Our campaign, a regional initiative of the national Talent Dividend, strives to increase the graduation rates at two and four-year college institutions. We understand that the prosperity of our region lies in the hands of an educated workforce, and that's why we chose to compete with 56 other cities for the Talent Dividend Prize, a \$1 million grant awarded to the metropolitan area that exhibits the largest increase in the number of degrees attained over a four-year period.

The following report outlines the results gleaned from our work since MDC's inception. The product is a compilation of national data and collaboration with local colleges to synthesize and evaluate our efforts to improve degree attainment rates in the Houston region. MDC still has some way to go before we reach our goal of a one percent increase in the number of post-secondary degrees. But our initial data is promising, and we can conclude with certainty that encouraging students to complete their college education has been a benefit to those individuals, to the Center, and to the region.

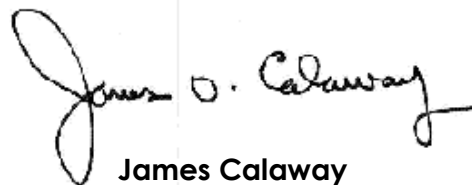
The evidence for continuing to promote higher education is unassailable: 58% of a city's success is directly attributed to the percentage of its adult population who hold a college degree. And while Houston is the nation's fourth largest city, we ranked only 34th in degree attainment in a 2010 survey. If we can achieve our initial goal of raising the attainment rate by just 1%, it will boost Houston's regional economy by \$5 billion annually. We are proud of our achievements, but we will continue to engage local businesses, governments, and educational institutions to ensure that the link between education and our region's prosperity remains strong.

We look forward to ongoing discussion of how we can continue working together to ensure the Houston region will be one of the most desirable global communities in which to live and work. Thank you for your contributions to My Degree Counts.

Sincerely,



Catherine Mosbacher
President and CEO
Center for Houston's Future



James Calaway
Chairman, Board of Directors
Center for Houston's Future

Background

CEOs for Cities, the Lumina Foundation, and the Kresge Foundation created the Talent Dividend, which will award \$1 million to the metropolitan region that increases degree attainment the most over three years. While the Center for Houston's Future (CHF) has had its eyes on the national Talent Dividend Prize, one of its main goals is to encourage cross-sector collaboration in raising the college attainment rate in the Houston region.

It is important to get all the relevant players—businesses, nonprofits, community colleges, four-year colleges, school districts, and local governments—in the same room. In order to build consensus on the best strategies to increase degree attainment, CHF hosted the Talent Dividend Summit at the University of Houston in September 2011.

In April 2012, CHF, along with Mayor Annise Parker, formally launched the My Degree Counts website as the local initiative of the Talent Dividend national campaign and competition. Since that time, various subcommittees have been working toward our goal of at least a 1% increase in degree completion. This report outlines progress to date, and the results through 2012 (latest figures unavailable at time of printing).

By the Numbers

28.9% Share of population in Houston region with a bachelor's degree or higher¹

35.3% Share of population in Houston region with an associate's degree or higher¹

4 Population ranking of Houston region in the United States¹

34 College attainment ranking of the Houston region among 50 largest metropolitan areas²

\$5 Billion The rise in total per capita income if college attainment were to increase by 1% in the Houston region³

Source: ¹US Census, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates (2011);

²The Brookings Institution (2011); ³The Houston Business Journal (2011)

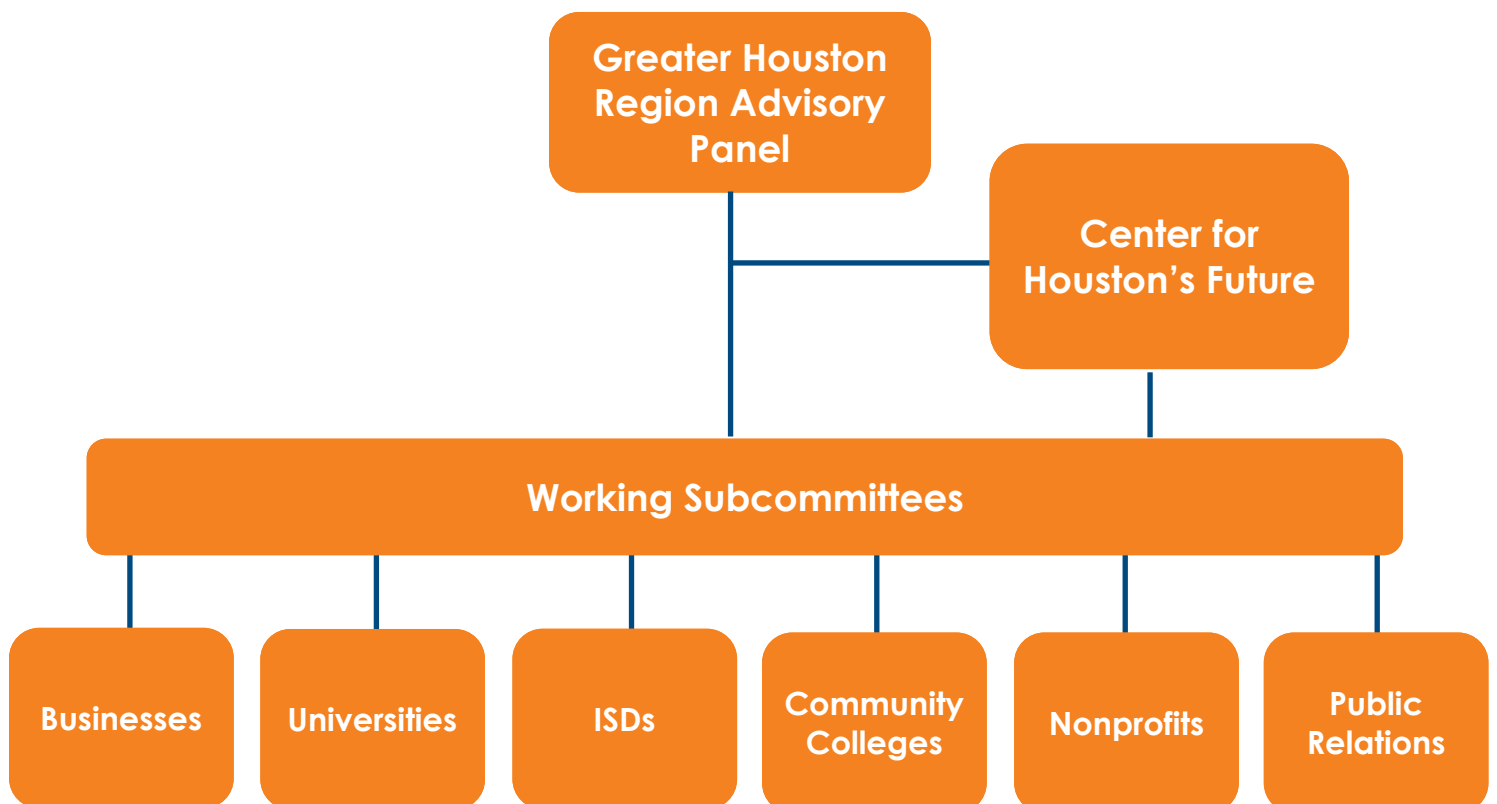
Timeline → → →

The Center hosted several events, beginning with the Talent Dividend Summit, to facilitate agreement on strategies to increase college attainment and to spread awareness about My Degree Counts.

September 2011: Talent Dividend Summit

The Center hosted a summit to develop a framework and steps to increase college attainment in the Houston region. The more than 100 stakeholders in attendance included representatives from businesses, nonprofits, and education.

My Degree Counts Structure



Subcommittees' Preliminary Strategies Developed at Talent Dividend Summit to Increase Degree Completions

Businesses	Universities	ISDs	Community Colleges	Nonprofits	Public Relations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate college-attainment awareness within business organizations and throughout their networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify “stop-outs” and near completers to encourage them to complete their degrees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up with dual-credit students to identify those close to earning an associate’s degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify near completers and provide them with assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with colleges and universities to help near completers who are returning to college by providing a range of support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft student-driven messages with information on available resources for near completers and transmit them through social media and paid radio advertising
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance awareness or create tuition reimbursement and mentoring programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on supporting seniors in college who are at risk of not graduating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of dual-credit students through awareness and materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market the value of an associate degree 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring in marketing experts from area universities and businesses to assist with outreach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold college fairs for employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage reverse-articulation agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen relationships with community colleges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share best practices related to freshman success courses 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize public service announcements on major local networks
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use success stories of role model athletes and musicians
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create branded web portals, English and Spanish

Timeline

February 2012: Talent Dividend Workshop

The Center featured a Talent Dividend Workshop at its 2012 Community Indicators Symposium on Human Capital Development and Education. The Symposium convened educators and experts whose innovative “cradle to career” practices and programs have proven successful across the country. Alan Thomson, Senior Partner and Managing Director at Boston Consulting Group, moderated the Talent Dividend Workshop Panel, which included Eyra Perez, Executive Director of the San Antonio Education Partnership, Dr. Lee Holcombe, Director at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Dr. Cathy Brigham, Director of Curriculum and Dean of Faculty at the Council for Adult & Experiential Learning.

April 2012: My Degree Counts Website Launch

Houston Mayor Annise Parker kicked off the public launch for the My Degree Counts website. Houston Texan football player James Casey and local rapper Baby Jay attended, along with leaders from Houston-area community colleges, universities, school districts, and nonprofits.

June 2012: Employer Program Launched

My Degree Counts and Chairs from the Business Committee developed a web-based Employer Toolkit to serve as a vehicle for employers to encourage and facilitate employees to begin or complete a college degree. My Degree Counts conducted meetings with several companies to encourage use of the Employer Toolkit.

August 2012: Nonprofit Toolkit Distributed

To assist nonprofits in promoting My Degree Counts to their clients and other nonprofit partners, the Center created a Nonprofit Toolkit. The Toolkit includes direct contact information to colleges/universities, posters for use on announcement boards and on websites, public service announcement videos to be used in promoting My Degree Counts on websites and Facebook pages, and a brochure showing the value of an associate degree and dual-credit enrollment. The Center distributed the Toolkit to nonprofit partners at a Subcommittee meeting in August and presented the resources to various nonprofits in October and November.

August-September 2012: Television & Radio PSAs

The Public Relations Subcommittee crafted television and radio advertising encouraging people to attend and return to college. The public service announcements (PSAs) promote the importance of a college degree and run on all three major network affiliates and are generously funded by ATT. The Houston Press and the Defender also promoted My Degree Counts.

October 2012: New Futuro College Fair

My Degree Counts partnered with *New Futuro*, a Chicago-based organization focused on college readiness for Latino students, to host a college preparation fair at the Reliant Center. The fair was well-attended. Bilingual advertisements for the fair featured the My Degree Counts online resources.

February 2013: Partnership with City of Houston

Mayor Annise Parker formally announced a partnership between the City of Houston and My Degree Counts. The partnership included a series of brown bag lunches and quarterly college fairs for City of Houston employees, which were filled to capacity. During the brown bag lunches, employees learned about the resources available through My Degree Counts, college admissions, and financial aid. The events were filled to capacity, with a dozen colleges represented.

June 2013: Partnership with City of Galveston

Mayor Lewis Rosen announced a partnership between the City of Galveston, the Galveston Economic Development Partnership, the Galveston Chamber of Commerce, and My Degree Counts. The partnership includes informational sessions, a college fair and luncheon, and a presentation on My Degree Counts hosted by the Galveston Chamber of Commerce.

Summer 2013: Participation in National Programs

My Degree Counts and the Center, in partnership with the City of Houston, were invited to participate in the National League of Cities' Leadership for Postsecondary Success Initiative, a 21-month competitive grant for technical assistance. The Lumina Foundation also invited the Center and MDC to submit an application to Lumina's Community Partnership grant program, a \$200,000 grant over three years to further community collaboration efforts toward postsecondary attainment.

Donors

AT&T

EL PASO CORPORATION

GREATER HOUSTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HOUSTON ENDOWMENT

JP MORGAN CHASE FOUNDATION

KINDER FOUNDATION

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LILLIAN AND C.W. DUNCAN FOUNDATION

LONE STAR COLLEGE SYSTEM

SAN JACINTO COLLEGE DISTRICT

SHELL FOUNDATION

STEVE AND SHEILA MILLER FOUNDATION

WILHELMINA 'BETH' ROBERTSON

Post-Secondary Partners

ALVIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BRAZOSPORT COLLEGE

COLLEGE OF THE MAINLAND

DEVRY UNIVERSITY

GALVESTON COLLEGE

HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HOUSTON BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

LEE COLLEGE

LONE STAR COLLEGE SYSTEM

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

SAN JACINTO COLLEGE

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-VICTORIA

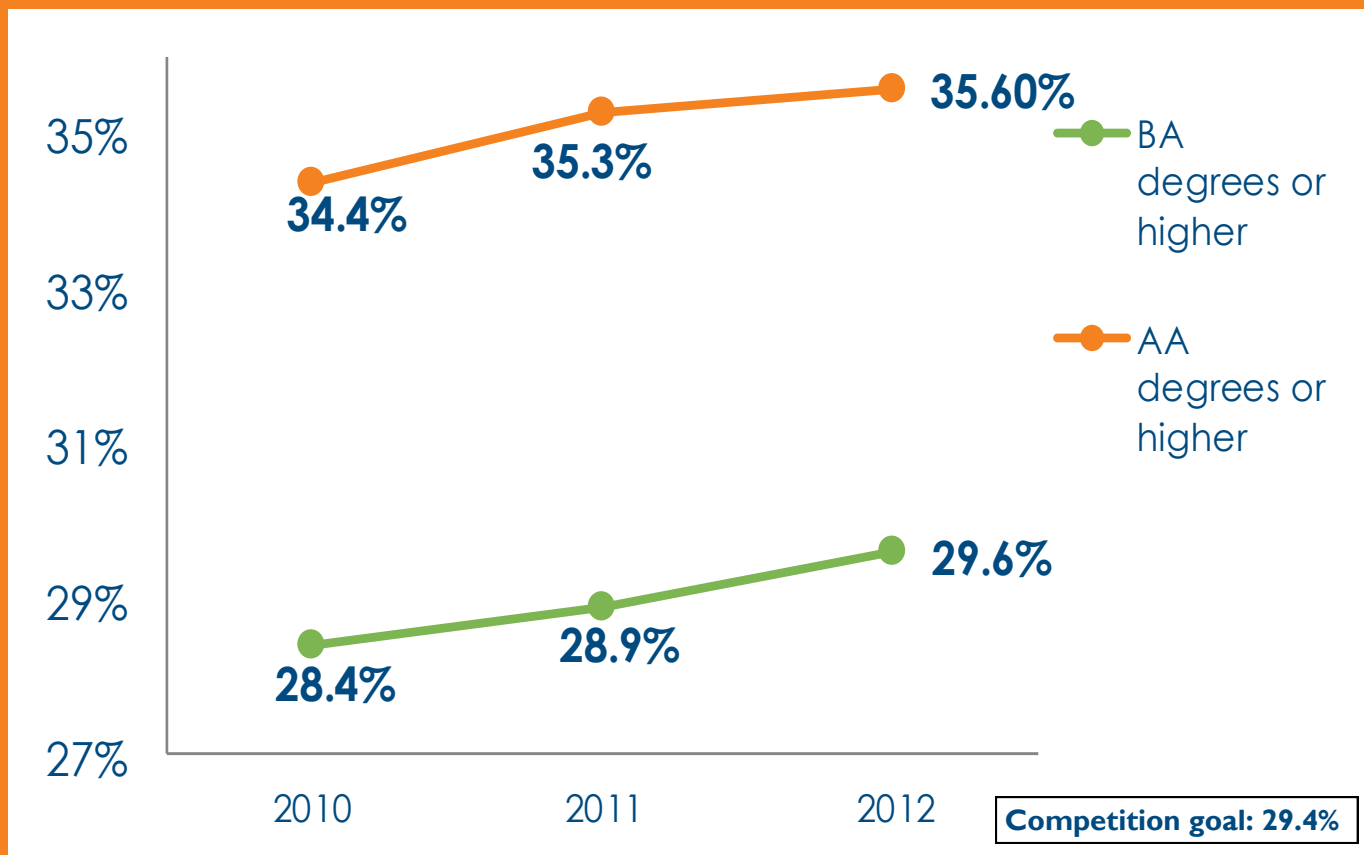
UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

WHARTON COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE

Results

MDC succeeded in bringing together the key cross-sector stakeholders essential to addressing the needs of postsecondary education – from policymakers to university chancellors to city officials. They came to the table to discuss how our region could increase the number of citizens who graduate with a college degree. The product is a partnership that extends across the ten-county region to reach not only the immediate goal of increasing degree attainment rates by more than one percent, but also the long-term goal of upholding the region's economic competitiveness and sustainability. The cross-sector collaboration wrought by MDC represents a significant achievement in higher education for our region. The following pages compile relevant data that convey the region's progress during the past three years.

Degree-Attainment Rates, 25 Years & Over



Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates

Lessons Learned

My Degree Counts was motivated by a great goal, which began with the National Talent Dividend Prize competition: to increase the number of two-year and four-year college degrees in our region by 1% (approximately 36,000 new degrees). MDC has been successful in motivating cross-sector leaders to work together to advance this issue – while highlighting the tremendous value of both two- and four-year degrees not only to an individual, but to the economy and growth of our region.

By engaging leaders across multiple sectors – nonprofits, municipalities, employers, ISDs, media, universities, and community college systems, MDC has created a regional network of professionals keenly interested in learning about educational best practices from one another and better coordinating their efforts.

In order to maintain ongoing commitments from institutions and their leadership, we will employ a more focused agenda in the future. A core component of future work will be consistent communication with those at the highest levels of leadership.

Key Takeaways

- Students must learn about the alternatives to the traditional “high school to four-year college” pathway, and MDC needs to make this a priority area of discussion. It is increasingly clear that the need for certificates and 2-year degrees is where the emphasis in post-secondary degree attainment must be.
- Targeting near-completers (or “stop-outs”) will not yield measurable results:
 - The schools need tremendous resources to identify and work with these students
 - Although the average stop-out has 90 credit hours at a 4-year institution, most have not followed an academic path to a major, and will require two more years to receive a degree
- There needs to be a stronger relationship between employers and post-secondary institutions and other stakeholders in order to close the skills gap. Stakeholders need to explore input from the workforce community to make students aware of career options, particularly those unique to the Houston region – and to ensure that jobs in the greatest demand are being filled with local graduates.
- Persistence is the key to completion, and schools must do a better job of keeping students enrolled and on a degree path. Best practices for this include:
 - Identify students who need pre-collegiate coursework to succeed
 - Leverage existing programs that support students in the first year of study
 - Require students to identify a major upon enrollment, streamlining the time it takes to get a degree
 - Have a comprehensive student/academic advising system, with mandatory checkpoints

Founding Advisory Panel

Elaine Barber, Vice President, Greater Houston Partnership

Dr. Richard Carpenter, Chancellor, Lone Star Community College

Douglas Foshee, CEO, El Paso Corporation

Kelly Frels, Managing Partner, Bracewell & Giuliani and CHF Board Member

Dr. Terry B. Grier, Superintendent, Houston Independent School District

Dr. Brenda Hellyer, Chancellor, San Jacinto College

The Honorable Scott Hochberg, Texas House of Representatives

Dr. Renu Khator, President, University of Houston

Steven Maislin, President, Greater Houston Community Foundation

Barbara Paige, Community Volunteer

Dr. John Rudley, President, Texas Southern University

Dr. Mary Spangler, Chancellor, Houston Community College

Subcommittee Chairs

Business

- Alan Thomson, Senior Partner & Managing Director, Boston Consulting Group
- John Hartung, Partner & Managing Director, Boston Consulting Group

University

- Dr. Robert Wimpelberg, Executive Director, All Kids Alliance

ISDs

- Dr. Julie F. Baker, Chief Academic Officer, Houston Independent School District

Community Colleges

- Dr. Charles Cook, Vice Chancellor, Houston Community College
- Dr. Steve Head, President, Lone Star College – North Harris
- Dr. Brenda Hellyer, Chancellor, San Jacinto College

Non-profits

- Barbara Paige, Community Volunteer

Public Relations

- Lisa Trapani Shumate, Executive Director, Houston Public Media

MDC Staff

Leigh Ann Arnold, Manager, My Degree Counts

Sandra Wegmann, Senior Manager, Strategic Initiatives

John Wilburn, Director of Strategic Initiatives

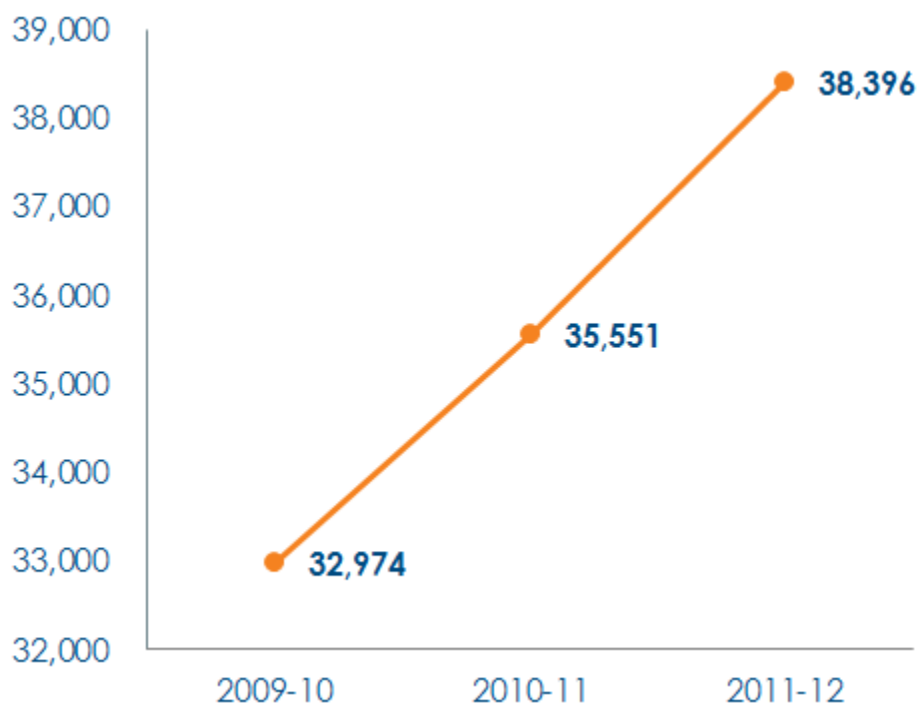
Talent Dividend Competition Data for the Houston Region

Degrees Awarded	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
AA	11,633	12,980 (+11.58%)	14,996 (+15.53%)
BA and higher	21,341	22,571 (+5.76%)	23,400 (+3.67%)
Total	32,974	35,551 (+7.82%)	38,396 (+8.00%)
Point Calculation			
AA (1 point)	11,633	12,980 (+11.58%)	14,996 (+15.53%)
BA and higher (2 points)	42,682	45,142 (+5.76%)	46,800 (+3.67%)
Total Points	54,315	58,122 (+7.01%)	61,796 (+6.32%)
Population	5,946,800	6,086,538 (+2.35%)	6,177,035 (+1.49%)
Points per 100,000 population	913	955 (+4.55%)	1,000 (+4.76%)

Note: The numbers in parentheses represent the percent changes from the previous academic year.

From 2009-10 to 2011-12, total degree completions increased by 16.44%

Total Degrees (AA & Higher) Completions



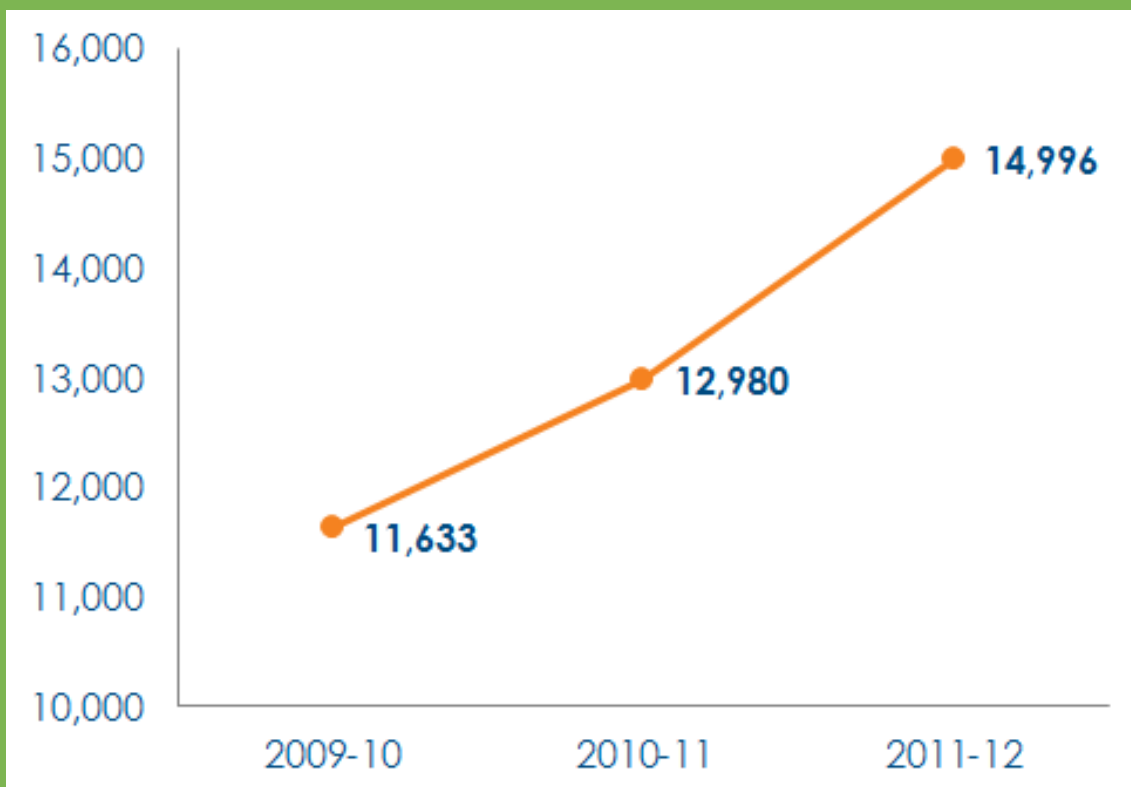
Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

Houston Region Associate Degree Completions

- ◆ During the past three years, our region's community colleges experienced rapid growth in degree completions
- ◆ Among the top 20 degree-producing two-year colleges in the United States, Lone Star College System ranks No. 3, Houston Community College ranks No. 4, and San Jacinto College is No. 20.

Source: Community College Weekly, 2013 Associate Degree & Certificate Producers

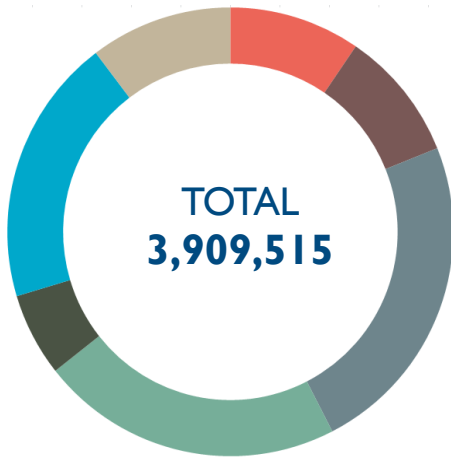
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Associate degree completions	11,633	12,980	14,996
Percent change from previous year	-	10.38%	15.53%



Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

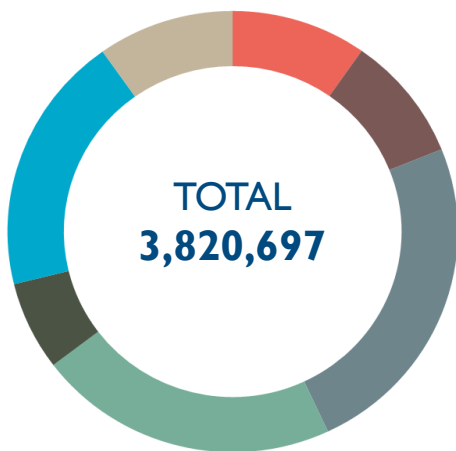
Houston Region Levels of Education by Year, 25 & Over

2012



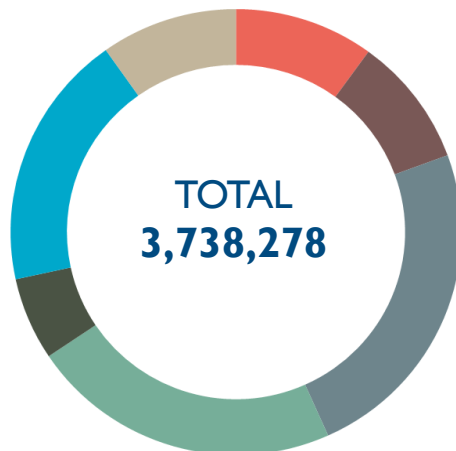
Less than ninth grade	370,805	9.5%
Ninth to 12th grade, no diploma	368,223	9.4%
High school graduate (including equivalency)	919,797	23.5%
Some college, no degree	856,562	21.9%
Associate degree	236,501	6.0%
Bachelor's degree	754,517	19.3%
Graduate or professional degree	403,110	10.3%

2011



Less than ninth grade	369,395	9.7%
Ninth to 12th grade, no diploma	353,318	9.2%
High school graduate (including equivalency)	920,588	24.1%
Some college, no degree	825,039	21.6%
Associate degree	250,012	6.5%
Bachelor's degree	727,703	19.0%
Graduate or professional degree	372,642	9.8%

2010

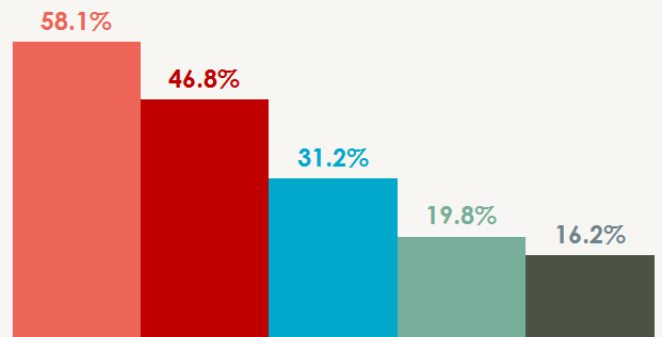


Less than ninth grade	374,362	10.0%
Ninth to 12th grade, no diploma	351,275	9.4%
High school graduate (including equivalency)	893,316	23.9%
Some college, no degree	833,785	22.3%
Associate degree	222,790	6.0%
Bachelor's degree	695,188	18.6%
Graduate or professional degree	367,562	9.8%

Degree Attainment Rates By Population Group, 25 & Over (Houston Region)

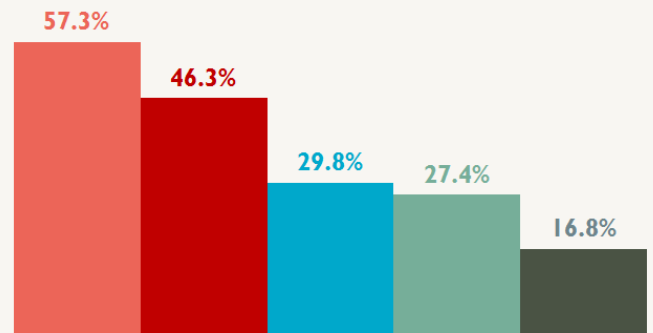
2012

	%	Total
Asian	58.1%	288,776
White	46.8%	1,734,566
Black	31.2%	647,926
Native American	19.8%	15,477
Hispanic	16.2%	1,196,060



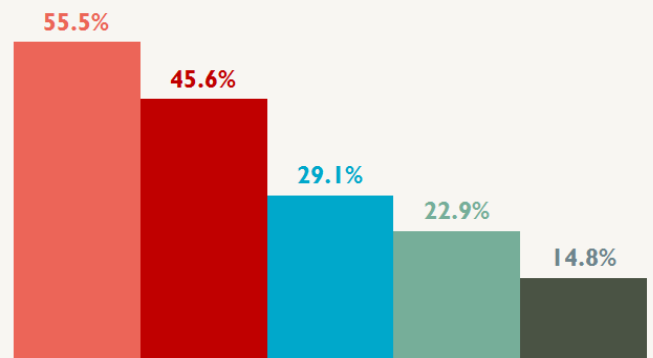
2011

	%	Total
Asian	57.3%	272,013
White	46.3%	1,716,788
Black	29.8%	631,178
Native American	27.4%	15,140
Hispanic	16.8%	1,163,299



2010

	%	Total
Asian	55.5%	265,709
White	45.6%	1,690,388
Black	29.1%	622,262
Native American	22.9%	16,491
Hispanic	14.8%	1,120,681



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates

Degree Completions in the Houston Region

	2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	AA	BA+	AA	BA+	AA	BA+
Alvin Community College	435	-	491	-	564	-
American College of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine	-	24	-	13	-	25
American Intercontinental University	41	131	41	130	38	121
Baylor College of Medicine	-	284	-	322	-	314
Brazosport College	230	21	269	24	401	14
Center for Advanced Legal Studies	64	-	57	-	65	-
College of Biblical Studies-Houston	28	103	23	91	19	45
College of Health Care Professions-Northwest	27	-	9	-	17	-
College of the Mainland	295	-	351	-	396	-
Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service	29	-	48	-	44	-
Culinary Institute Alain and Marie Lenotre	46	-	43	-	79	-
Galveston College	178	-	199	-	206	-
Houston Baptist University	5	430	5	442	2	505
Houston Community College System	3,285	-	3,606	-	3,860	-
Houston Graduate School of Theology	-	42	-	52	-	40
ITT Technical Institute-Houston North	246	-	304	19	328	32
ITT Technical Institute-Houston West	222	-	249	28	255	56
ITT Technical Institute-Webster	100	-	123	17	151	20
Lee College	785	-	729	-	654	-
Lone Star College System	3,036	-	3,320	-	4,208	-
Prairie View A & M University	-	1,470	-	1,446	-	1,488
Remington College-Houston Campus	58	-	64	-	94	-
Remington College-Houston Southeast Campus	1	-	26	-	27	-
Remington College-North Houston Campus	43	-	57	-	71	-
Rice University	-	1,582	-	1,599	-	1,665
San Jacinto College	2,142	-	2,519	-	2,840	-
Sanford Brown College-Houston	19	-	40	-	142	-
South Texas College of Law	-	373	-	401	-	381
Texas A & M University at Galveston	-	274	-	259	-	328
Texas Chiropractic College Foundation Inc	-	54	-	83	-	72
Texas School of Business-Friendswood	-	-	9	-	23	-
Texas School of Business-North	-	-	22	-	74	-
Texas Southern University	-	1,214	-	1,239	-	1,391
The Art Institute of Houston	164	223	179	229	217	277
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston	-	999	-	1,215	-	1,322
The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center	-	101	-	114	-	108
The University of Texas Medical Branch	-	830	-	811	-	994
University of Houston	-	7,230	-	7,840	-	8,203
University of Houston-Clear Lake	-	2,127	-	2,292	-	2,350
University of Houston-Downtown	-	2,376	-	2,562	-	2,362
University of Phoenix-Houston	-	836	-	692	-	444
University of St Thomas	-	617	-	651	-	843
Vet Tech Institute of Houston	74	-	98	-	145	-
Westwood College-Houston South	80	-	99	-	76	-
Total completions awarded per year	11,633	21,341	12,980	22,571	14,996	23,400
Percent change from previous year	-	-	10.38%	5.76%	15.53%	3.67%
Total degree (AA and higher) completions	32,974		35,551		38,396	
Percent change from previous year in total degree (AA and higher) completions	-		7.82%		8.00%	

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

Center for Houston's Future

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