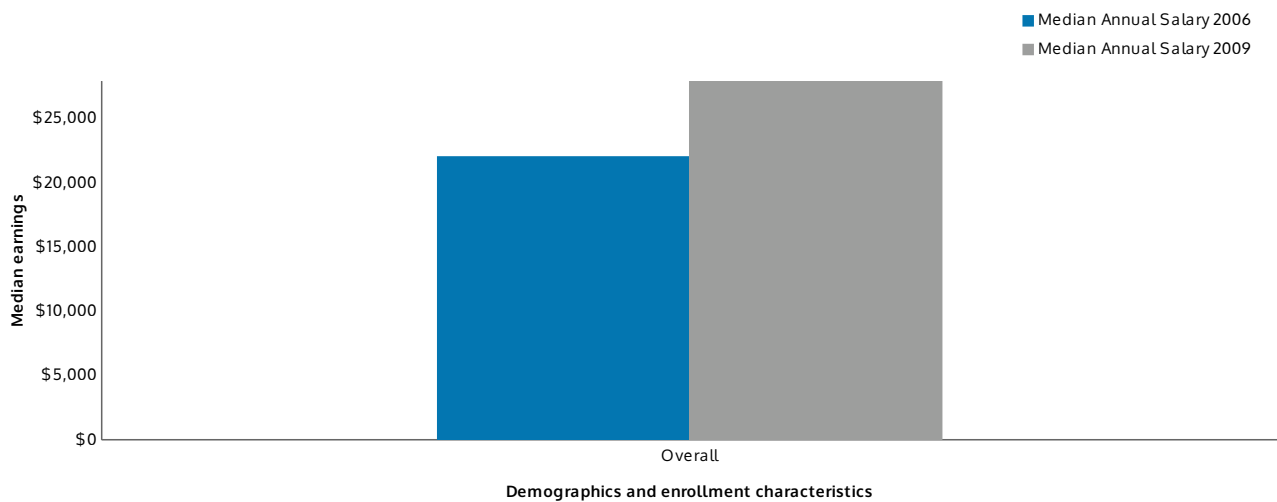


WORKFORCE PREPARATION AND EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

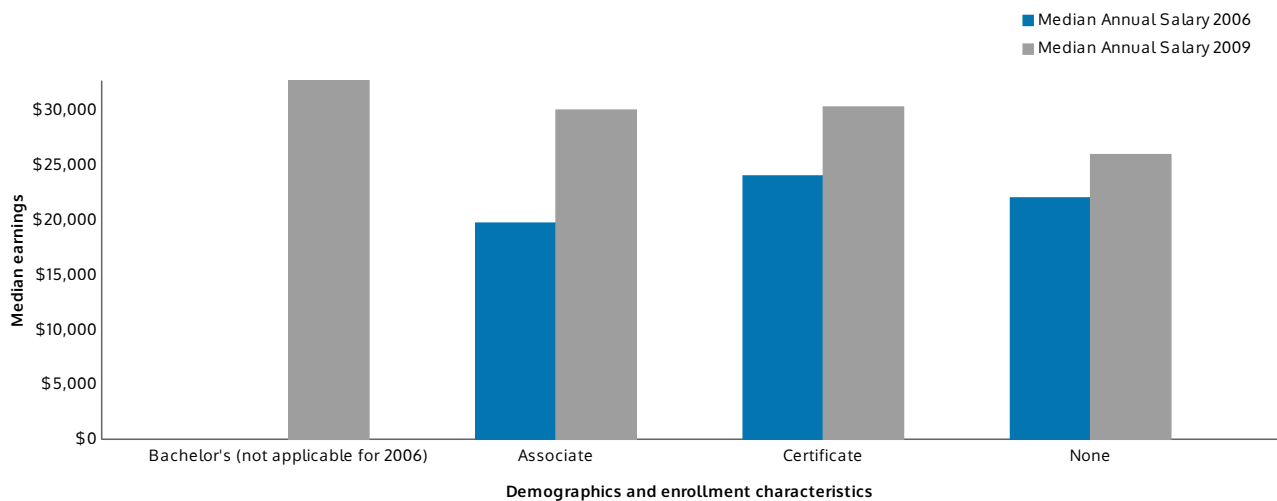
MEDIAN ANNUAL EARNINGS: UNITED STATES

Median annual earnings of former United States community college students as of spring 2006 and spring 2009, by demographic and enrollment characteristics

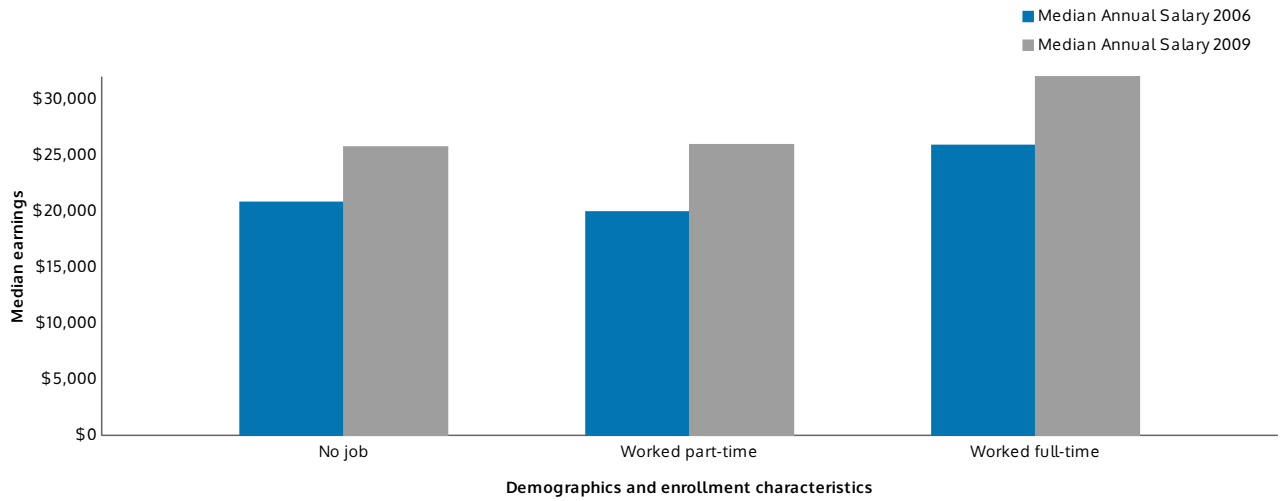
OVERALL



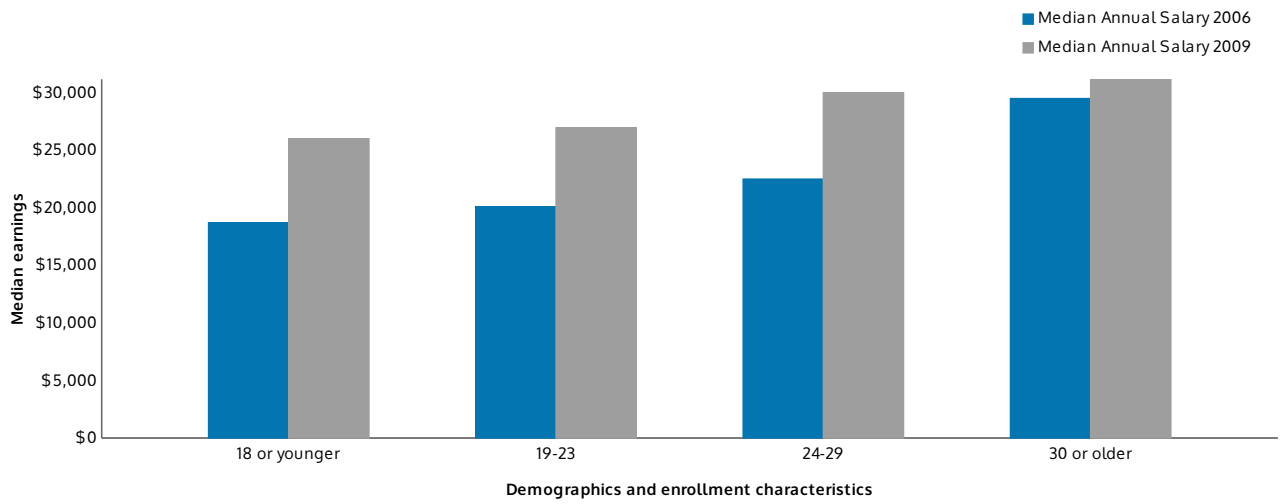
HIGHEST DEGREE ATTAINED AFTER SIX YEARS



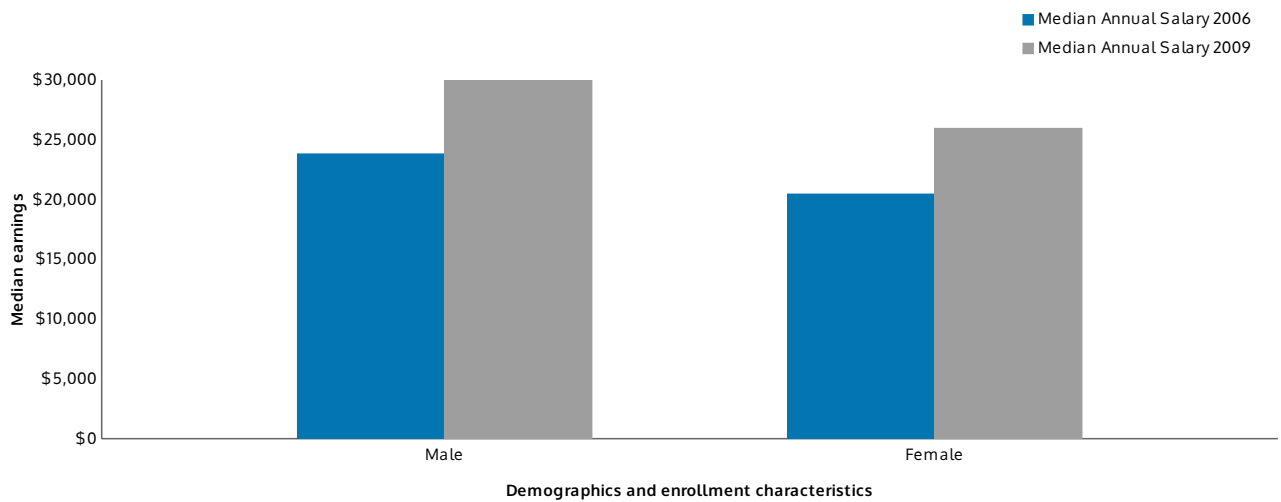
WORK INTENSITY, FIRST YEAR ENROLLED



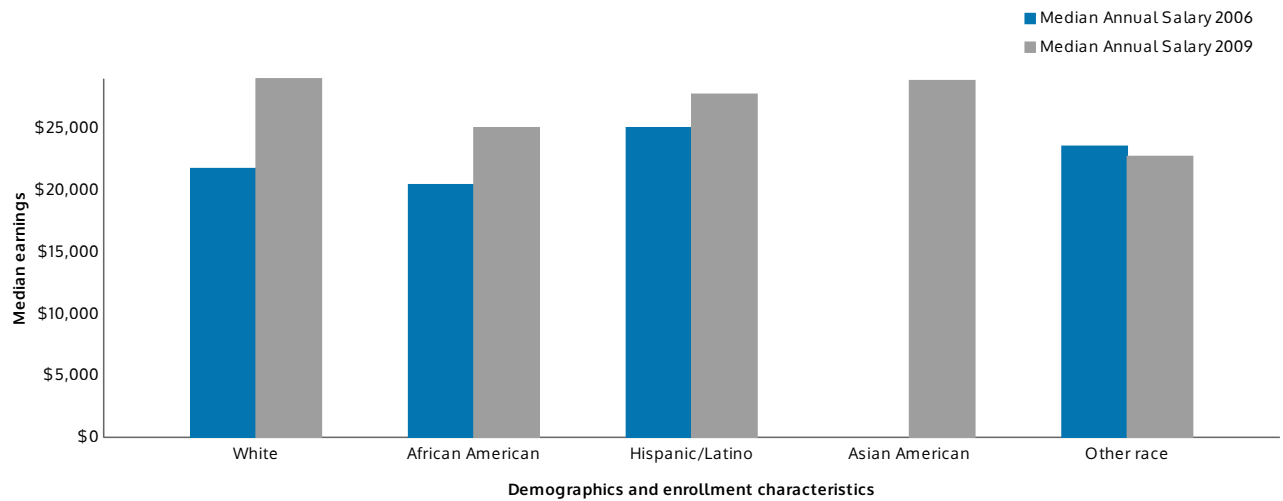
AGE, FIRST YEAR ENROLLED



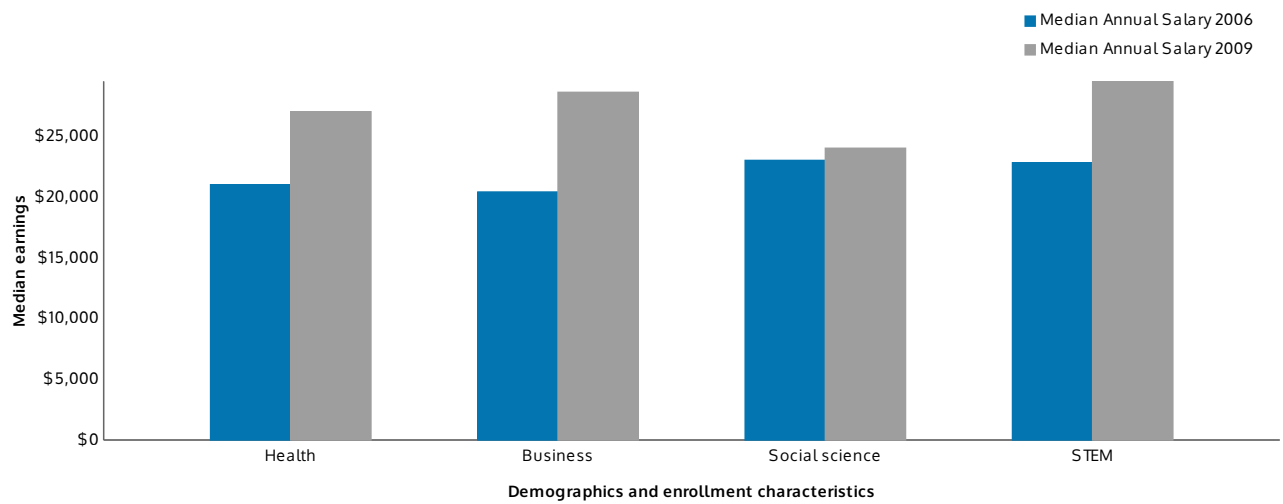
GENDER



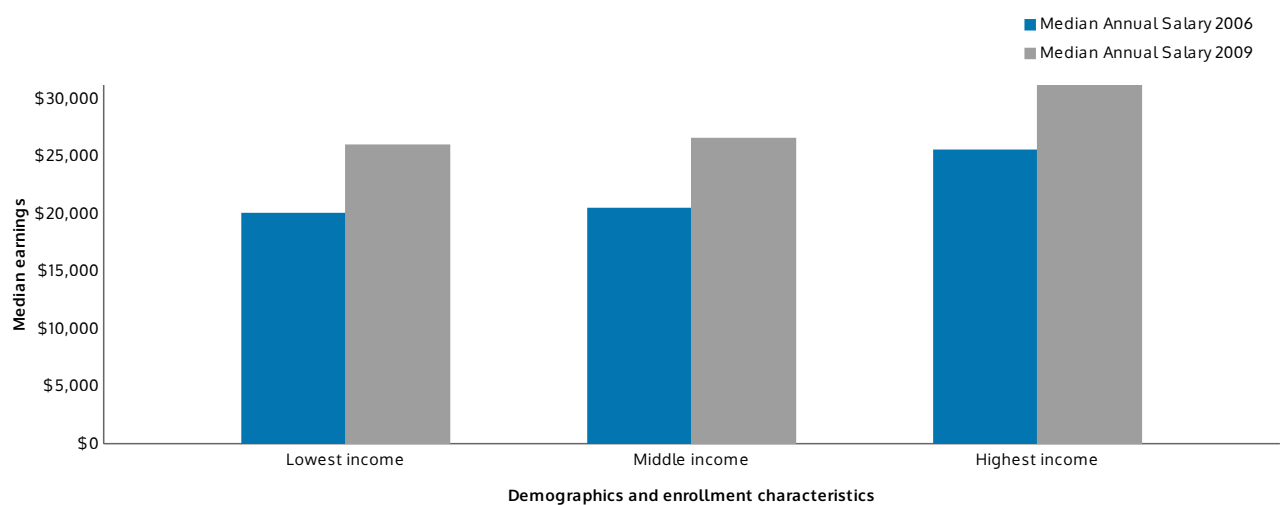
RACE/ETHNICITY



MAJOR, FIRST YEAR ENROLLED



INCOME PERCENTILE RANK WHEN FIRST ENROLLED



What Is Measured?

Median annual earnings of employed former students who were not enrolled, 2006 and 2009

Who Is Counted?

First-time college students who first enrolled in U.S. community colleges in the 2003-04 academic year who were not enrolled in any postsecondary institution as of spring 2006 and spring 2009

What It Tells Us

Overall, the median annual earnings of former community college students was \$22,000 in 2006 and \$27,900 in 2009. Students who earned a bachelor's degree had the highest median earnings (\$32,700) in 2009, followed by students who earned a certificate (\$30,300), students who earned an associate degree (\$30,000), and students who did not earn a credential (\$26,000).

Why It's Important

Many students enroll in community colleges to gain new skills so that they can improve their employment prospects. Recent studies have found that median earnings for those with associate degrees are higher than median earnings for high school graduates (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2010). Even among students who do not complete a degree, the average effect of attending a community college is estimated at a 10 percent increase for women and 9 percent for men (Belfield & Bailey, 2011). Fewer studies have examined vocational certificates at the national level, but their results are consistent with the research on associate degrees, with certificate recipients showing a substantial advantage in earnings (Bosworth, 2010).

ABOUT THE DATA

Annual earnings: Spring 2006 earnings were calculated for respondents who were employed, were not enrolled in any institution after June 2005, and were not planning to re-enroll. Spring 2009 earnings were calculated for respondents who were not enrolled at any institution after January 2009.

Race/ethnicity: Other includes Native American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and individuals who indicated Other or Two or more races. Race categories exclude Hispanic/Latino origin unless specified.

Social sciences and humanities: includes cultural and gender studies; visual and performing arts; English language and literature; family and consumer sciences; philosophy, theology, and religious studies; psychology; social sciences and history; and liberal arts, general studies, and humanities.

STEM: includes agricultural and natural resource studies; biological and biomedical sciences; computer and information sciences and support; engineering; mathematics and statistics; physical sciences; science technologies and technicians; and engineering technologies and related fields.

Income percentile rank: calculated separately for dependent and independent students and then combined. Each ranking thus compares the respondent only to other respondents of the same dependency status. Uses parents' income if respondent is dependent and uses respondent's own income if respondent is independent.

DATA SOURCE

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003-04 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Second Follow-up (BPS:04/09).