What Is Measured?
Average hourly wages at time of exit and five quarters after exit

Who Is Counted?
Oregon Community College students who exited in 2009

What It Tells Us
The hourly wages for Oregon Community College students who exited in the calendar year 2009 ranged from $16 to $20 in the first quarter after exit, while the hourly wages for the same students ranged from $19 to $22 in the fifth quarter after exit.

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
Exiters: participants who received services and exited the program. This does not necessarily indicate attainment of a degree, certificate, or diploma.

Employment data are obtained from Oregon Unemployment Insurance wage records and data submitted to the Performance Reporting Information System by the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development. Out-of-state wage records are supplied by the Wage Record Interchange System. Average hourly wages in the first and fifth quarter after exit were calculated by dividing the total wages earned by the number of hours worked in that quarter.

DATA SOURCE