WORKFORCE PREPARATION AND EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES
MEAN AND MEDIAN QUARTERLY EARNINGS: WASHINGTON

Median and mean quarterly earnings for Washington Community and Technical Colleges IT students enrolled in 2000-01 and who completed a program or left by spring of 2004-05.

What Is Measured?
Mean and median quarterly earnings

Who Is Counted?
Washington Community and Technical Colleges Information Technology (IT) students enrolled in 2000-01 and who completed a program or left by spring of 2004-05

What It Tells Us
Students who started in Washington Community and Technical Colleges in 2000-01 and who attained both an associate degree and a certificate in an IT field had the highest mean quarterly earnings ($4,400) compared to those who completed a single credential. Mean quarterly earnings of students who attained only a certificate ($4,300) were higher than the earnings of those who attained only an associate degree ($3,800) and those who did not complete any credential ($4,100).

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
Information Technology (IT): includes Computer Programming; Data Processing; Information Science/Studies; Computer Systems Analysis; Computer Software and Media Applications; Computer Systems Networking and Telecommunications; Computer/Information Technology Administration and Management; Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services; and other. Excludes certain courses related to more general computer and office skills.

IT Concentrator: students who did not earn a certificate or an associate degree but took at least four IT courses or earned at least 12 credits in IT.

Employment data come from Washington State Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records and include data from Washington and neighboring states. UI data do not include those working for the federal government, serving in the military, self-employed, working “off the books,” or employed outside of Washington and neighboring states. Students who transferred to other schools subsequent to their enrollment in Washington Community and Technical Colleges were excluded, as were students still enrolled there as of 2005-06.

DATA SOURCE
York: Columbia University, Teachers College, Community College Research Center.