

# Demographics of America's Future Workforce

## Today's Youth are America's Workforce Pipeline

- By 2018, the youth labor force, composed of 16- to 24-year-olds, is expected to reach over 21 million individuals.<sup>i</sup>
- By 2030, although 41 million new workers will enter the work force, a staggering 76 million will enter retirement, leaving a shortage of workers that will be hard to fill.<sup>ii</sup>

## Are America's Future Workers Prepared?

- Nearly 6 million youth (ages 16 – 24) are not in school and do not have a job.<sup>iii</sup> Since 2000, the number non-engaged young adults (age 18-24) grew by 878,000, a 20 percent increase.<sup>iv</sup>
- 40% of employers said that the high school graduates they hire lack enough of the “soft” skills they need even for entry-level jobs.<sup>v</sup>
- In 2005, 27 percent of 8th grade students scored below the basic reading level<sup>vi</sup> and
- 31 percent of 8th grade students scored below the basic math level.<sup>vii</sup>
- Nationwide the overall graduation rate for the class of 2005 was 70 percent, with one-third of all public high school students failing to graduate.<sup>viii</sup>
- Only half of the nation's minority students graduate from high school along with their peers. For many groups – Latino, black, or Native American males – graduation rates are even lower.<sup>ix</sup>
- Six out of ten (63%) first-time, full-time degree-seeking college freshmen earn a B.A. within six years. Low-income and minority students are the least likely to actually graduate. Only 40% of African American and 47% of Latino students are graduating within six years.<sup>x</sup>

## Many young people are unprepared to meet the needs of employers or the challenges of higher education.

- Eighty percent of the 30 fastest-growing occupations—including allied health, computer-related, environmental science, and social and human services—will need a highly skilled and educated labor pool to draw from to remain competitive in a global market.<sup>xi</sup>
- The U.S. economy is projected to add 15 million jobs by 2016 –half will require post-secondary credentials<sup>xii</sup>
- American business currently spends more than \$60 billion each year on training, much of that on remedial reading, writing, and mathematics. High school dropouts are unable to enter the workforce with the necessary skills to meet the demands of the nation's global economy.<sup>xiii</sup>
- 42 percent of college instructors and 45 percent of employers say that high school graduates are not prepared for college and employment.<sup>xiv</sup>

## Teen Employment Rates are at a Record Low

- The current employment rates for teens and young adults are at historically record lows. Over the September-October 2007 to September-October 2009 period, the number of employed teens in the U.S. declined by nearly 23% while the number of employed 20-24 year olds fell by nearly 10%.<sup>xv</sup>
- At the close of 2009, the jobless rate for African-American teens was more than 43 percent, 35.5 percent for Latino teens, and 21.8 percent for white teens, not seasonally adjusted.<sup>xvi</sup>
- The employment rate of teens decreases sharply with family income. Students who live in high-poverty neighborhoods and students from low-income families are much less likely to work than youth in higher-income communities or from higher income families.

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<sup>i</sup> United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2009/11/art3full.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> Skills USA, <http://www.skillsusa.org/downloads/PDF/partnerguid2.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Annie E Casey Foundation, Kids Count Data Center, <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

<sup>iv</sup> Annie E Casey Foundation, Kids Count Data Center,

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/acrossstates/Rankings.aspx?loct=2&by=a&order=a&ind=37&dtm=313&tf=35>

<sup>v</sup> America's Promise, <http://www.americaspromise.org/Resources/Research-and-Reports/~media/Files/About/ECEP%20Workforce%20Brief.ashx>

<sup>vi</sup> National Assessment of Educational Progress, The Nation's Report Card,

[http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading\\_math\\_2005/s0005.asp?tab\\_id=tab2&subtab\\_id=Tab\\_1&printver=#chart](http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2005/s0005.asp?tab_id=tab2&subtab_id=Tab_1&printver=#chart)

<sup>vii</sup> National Assessment of Educational Progress, The Nation's Report Card,

[http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading\\_math\\_2005/s0020.asp?tab\\_id=tab2&subtab\\_id=Tab\\_1&printver=#chart](http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2005/s0020.asp?tab_id=tab2&subtab_id=Tab_1&printver=#chart)

<sup>viii</sup> America's Promise Alliance, <http://www.americaspromise.org/~media/Files/Resources/CiC09.ashx>

<sup>ix</sup> Harvard Education Publishing Group, <http://gseweb.harvard.edu/~hepg/dropoutsinamerica.html>

<sup>x</sup> Education Trust, [http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/publications/files/one\\_step\\_from.pdf](http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/publications/files/one_step_from.pdf)

<sup>xi</sup> Center for American Progress, [http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/10/postsecondary\\_pathways.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/10/postsecondary_pathways.html)

<sup>xii</sup> Center for American Progress, [http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/10/postsecondary\\_pathways.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/10/postsecondary_pathways.html)

<sup>xiii</sup> Alliance for Excellent Education, [http://www.all4ed.org/publications/Economy\\_percent20Factoids\\_percent20forpercent20Website.doc](http://www.all4ed.org/publications/Economy_percent20Factoids_percent20forpercent20Website.doc).

<sup>xiv</sup> Achieve, [http://www.achieve.org/files/pollreport\\_0.pdf](http://www.achieve.org/files/pollreport_0.pdf)

<sup>xv</sup> Center for Labor Market Studies, <http://www.nyec.org/content/documents/DireStraitforManyAmericanWorkers.pdf>

<sup>xvi</sup> United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved January 8, 2010. <http://www.bls.gov/data/#historical-tables>