

# Education is Your Future



## Education Opens Doors

- ◆ The more you learn, the more you earn.
- ◆ College graduates earn far more than high school graduates.
- ◆ On average, college graduates earn about \$2.2 million during their working lives, or about \$1 million more than high school graduates.
- ◆ Education and training offer major benefits to both current and future job seekers. Sixty percent of all new jobs related to growth will require an Associate's Degree or higher.
- ◆ Some form of post-secondary education is essential for those seeking a rewarding, well-paid career path with potential for growth.
- ◆ Poverty rates are higher for families without a college education.

Sources: MA Department of Workforce Development, Annual Profile for Berkshire County Workforce Area, May 2009; [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)



## Berkshire Compact for Education

*Dedicated to ensuring that all Berkshire County residents aspire to obtain 16 or more years of education and training*

[www.berkshirecompact.org](http://www.berkshirecompact.org)

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## There is a College for Everyone!

- ◆ Higher education is available to everyone, regardless of age, socio-economic status or academic standing.
- ◆ With more than 3,800 colleges in the United States, there are options for everyone who is either a high school graduate or has a GED.
- ◆ Both four-year colleges and two-year community colleges are great options. The Berkshires host two public institutions, Berkshire Community College and Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.
- ◆ Massachusetts public four-year colleges have minimum admission requirements with high school performance holding the most weight. Standardized tests are required by most four-year colleges; however, minimum scores are not always considered.
- ◆ Community colleges offer many programs and require verification of a high school diploma or GED. You can attend a community college then transfer to a four-year college after you have completed an Associate's degree or a minimum of 12 transferable credits.
- ◆ Trade and technical schools and apprenticeships are other good options.



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## You CAN Afford it

- ◆ Massachusetts public colleges are the most affordable choices for students and families. The cost of tuition and fees for a state college in Massachusetts is 80% less than the average private college in New England.
- ◆ Berkshire county residents can access scholarship programs such as the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship program which provides tuition waivers connected to MCAS performance. Also, the Paul Tsongas Scholarship recognizes high achieving students with a full tuition and fee waiver at any state college in Massachusetts, a value of approximately \$7,000.
- ◆ Nationally, about two-thirds of full-time college students receive grant aid to help pay for their education, such as Pell grants, state grants or scholarships. Locally, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and Berkshire Community College offer students affordable tuition and attractive financial aid packages.
- ◆ Dual Enrollment or Advanced Placement classes allow high school students to earn college credits and be introduced to college level work.
- ◆ Getting a job during high school and college is a great way to finance college.
- ◆ For more information about financial aid options visit:

[www.readyssetgotocollege.com](http://www.readyssetgotocollege.com) • [www.financialaid.org](http://www.financialaid.org) • [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)  
[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) • [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)



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## Early Years are Learning Years

- ◆ The early childhood years—from birth to age eight—are the most important period for literacy development.
- ◆ High-quality early childhood programs help children develop skills they need to succeed in school.
- ◆ Progress in reading and writing is a major factor in whether a child will do well in school and go on to contribute actively in society.
- ◆ Reading aloud to children is the single most important activity for building the understanding and skills essential for reading success.
- ◆ Family involvement helps children achieve higher grades and test scores, have better attendance at school, complete more homework and demonstrate a positive attitude.
- ◆ Frequent and positive messages from teachers to parents help to keep them actively engaged in their child's education.

Sources: National Association for the Education of Young Children website ([www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)); Wells 1985; Bus, Van Ijzendoorn, and Pellegrini 1995



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