

**55,000
Degrees**



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Louisville Sets New Record in Education Attainment

Leaders encouraged by Census data, but say momentum needs to build

Louisville, Ky. (September 16, 2016) – Louisville’s adult population has set a new record for college attainment, according to 2015 data released this week from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey. Highlights of the data include:

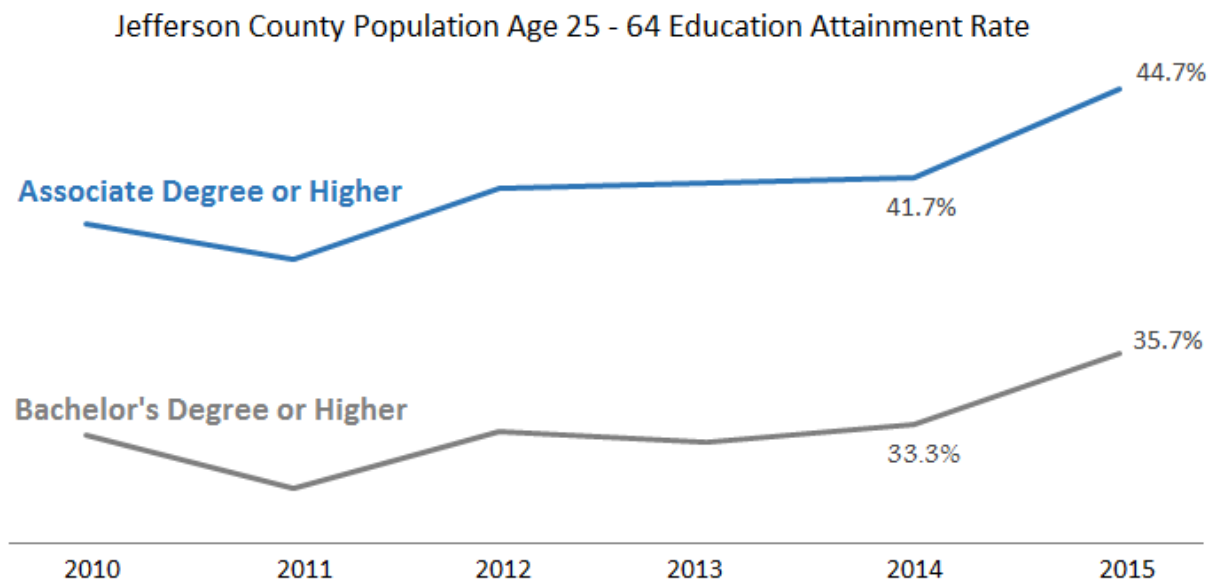
- The percentage of working-age adults with at least an associate degree now stands at 44.7 percent, up 3 percentage points over the previous year.
- The percentage with at least a bachelor’s degree was also up to 35.7 percent, a 2.4 percentage point increase.
- In addition, in the annual ranking of 15 “Peer Cities” tracked by the organization, Louisville moved up to the No. 9 position for adults with at least an associate’s degree, passing Greensboro, N.C.
- These are the most significant gains since 55,000 Degrees was created in 2010.

“This is the kind of news we’ve been working toward,” said Mary Gwen Wheeler, the executive director of 55,000 Degrees, Louisville’s education movement. “We are optimistic for the future as our partners continue to make positive progress toward our community goal. Louisville is continually developing the type of workforce we need for a 21st Century economy. There is still work to be done – we can’t get complacent.”

55,000 Degrees started six years ago, with a simple goal: By 2020, 50 percent of working-age adults in Louisville should have at least an associate degree. In 2010, just 40.1 percent of Louisville adults had a college degree.

“To compete in today’s economy, you need a highly skilled workforce,” said Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer, chairman of the 55,000 Degrees board. “We are encouraged to see progress being made, but we know we have to keep working.”

Education attainment has become a key measure of whether cities have the skilled workforce needed for a 21st Century economy. Growth in college attainment comes from increasing the percentage of high school graduates who go on to complete college degrees, from encouraging adult workers to return to school, and from attracting college-graduates to the region because of quality of life and work opportunities.



*Data from United States Census Bureau American Community Survey 2016

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