



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, December 16, 2011

Study Tracks Placement of South Dakota Public University Graduates

RAPID CITY, S.D. – A new study shows that about 70 percent of South Dakota resident students who attend one of the state’s six public universities will remain here after college graduation to either work or to pursue additional postsecondary education.

Further, about 3 of every 10 out-of-state students who attend one of South Dakota’s public universities also remain in the state following graduation, according to a special data analysis conducted for the South Dakota Board of Regents.

“If South Dakota is to address what appears to be a looming shortage of available workers, and especially highly-skilled workers, we must redouble our efforts to attract and retain more college graduates within the state,” said Regents President Kathryn Johnson. “This study underscores both the social and economic importance of increasing the number of degree completions in South Dakota.”

The study alludes to a workforce problem in South Dakota based on the following evidence:

- **The supply of new jobs in South Dakota is growing.** The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects more than 41,000 new jobs will be created in the state between 2008 and 2018.
- **The next generation of South Dakota’s homegrown workforce is smaller than the current workforce.** In the decade ending in 2010, the number of South Dakota residents ages 10-14 fell by 9.3 percent, while those ages 15-19 fell by 7.7 percent. At the same time, South Dakotans within the 55-59 and 60-64 age groups rose by 61.3 percent and 51.6 percent, respectively.
- **South Dakota lags in educational attainment.** Only 25.1 percent of South Dakotans over the age of 24 have a bachelor’s degree or higher, ranking the state 34th among all states on this measure and below the national average of 27.9 percent.

In an effort to draw more non-resident students to South Dakota, public universities in 2006 lowered their non-resident tuition rates to 150 percent of the in-state rate. Johnson said that was very deliberate public policy strategy to attract young people to South Dakota and it has been quite successful. She notes that in spite of a decline of almost 1,000 high school graduates in South Dakota over the last six years, a record number of students are now showing up at the public universities’ doors.

Of the total number going on to college from South Dakota, 45 percent went to one of the public universities, 24 percent went out of state, 19 percent attended one of the state’s postsecondary technical institutes, and 12 percent enrolled in one of the other in-state colleges and universities.

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Data for this study were generated through the combined efforts of the Regents Information Systems, the state Department of Labor and Regulation, and the National Student Clearinghouse. Data on degree completers from the regents' system for four academic years ending in 2009 were matched against state labor employment data to determine job placement outcomes. In cases where there was no match, National Student Clearinghouse data were used to gather enrollment information on any students attempting further coursework after college graduation.

A link to the full report is available on the Board of Regents' website at:
<http://www.sdbor.edu/mediapubs/issuebriefs/documents/PlacementOutcomes.pdf>.