

HELPING ADULTS NAVIGATE MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE & CAREER



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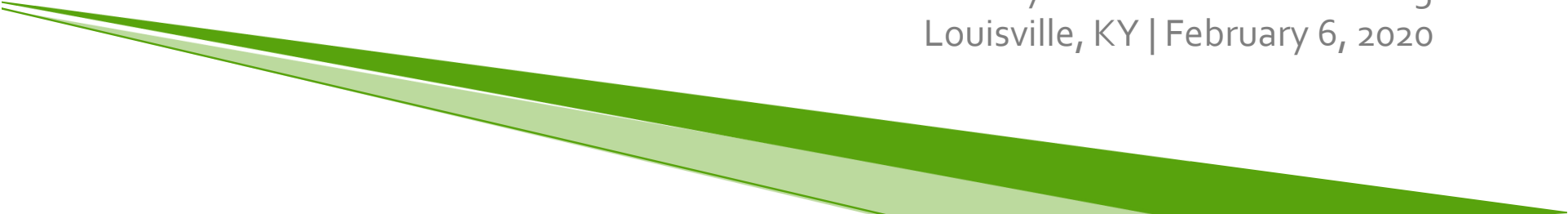
Helping Adults Navigate Multiple Pathways to College & Career

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A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, elongated, teardrop-shaped elements in various shades of green, pointing towards the right side of the slide.

Overview

- ▶ What today's **complex** economy means for **today's** students
- ▶ CEW **research** on adults and postsecondary credentials
- ▶ Policy and practice **implications**
- ▶ Q&A

Today's modern economy

840 ▶ The number of occupations

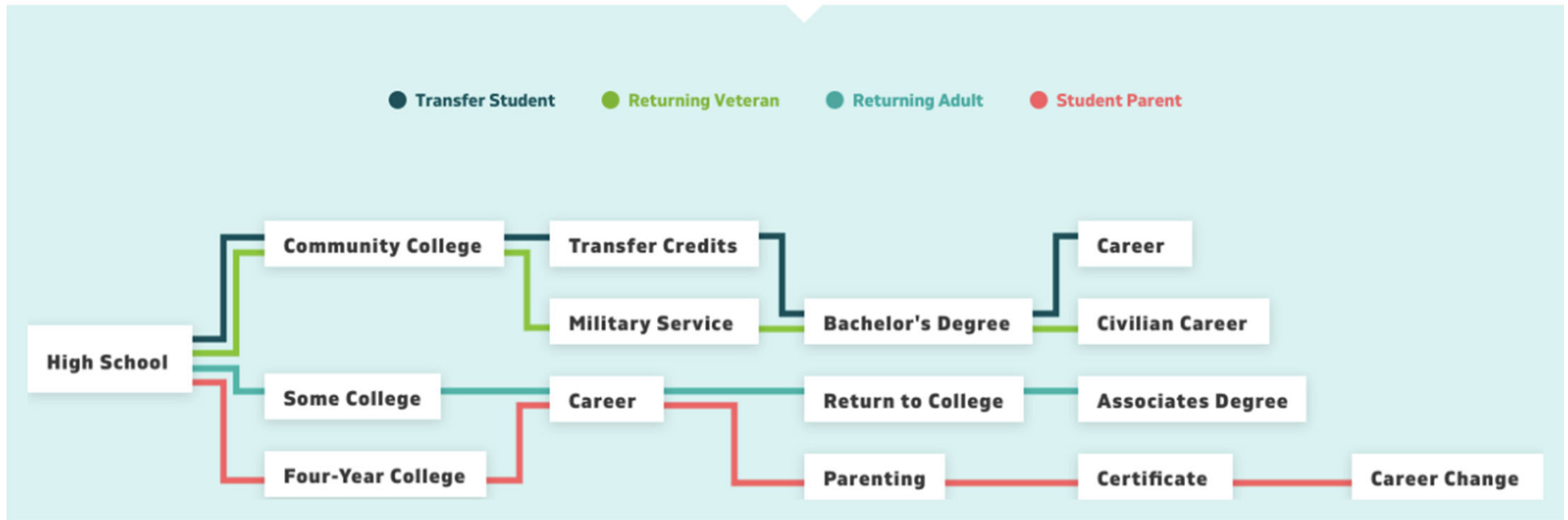
2,260 ▶ The number of programs of study

4,720 ▶ The number of colleges

20m ▶ The number of students

Today's Students, New Pathways

Instead of going to, and finishing, college directly after high school, many of today's students are returning to get additional education and training while working and raising families or changing careers.



“If you could get English 101 for \$600 compared to \$1,600—I think it goes without saying which one you choose”

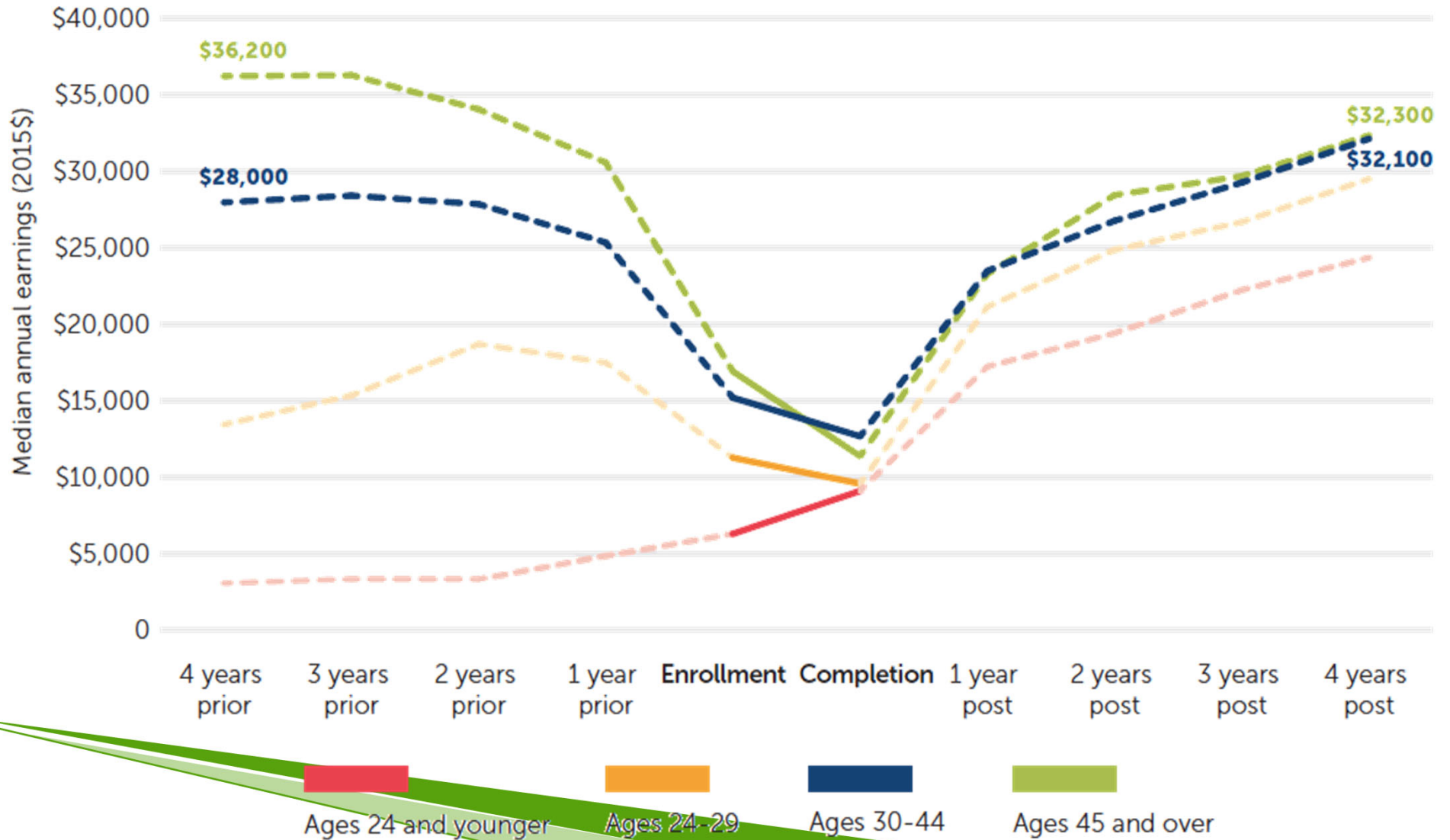
BRANDY, 38-year-old, African-American student at Prince George’s Community College (MD)

“I often think about whether or not it was the right decision to go to school as a parent and whether or not I should have dropped a class or take some time off”

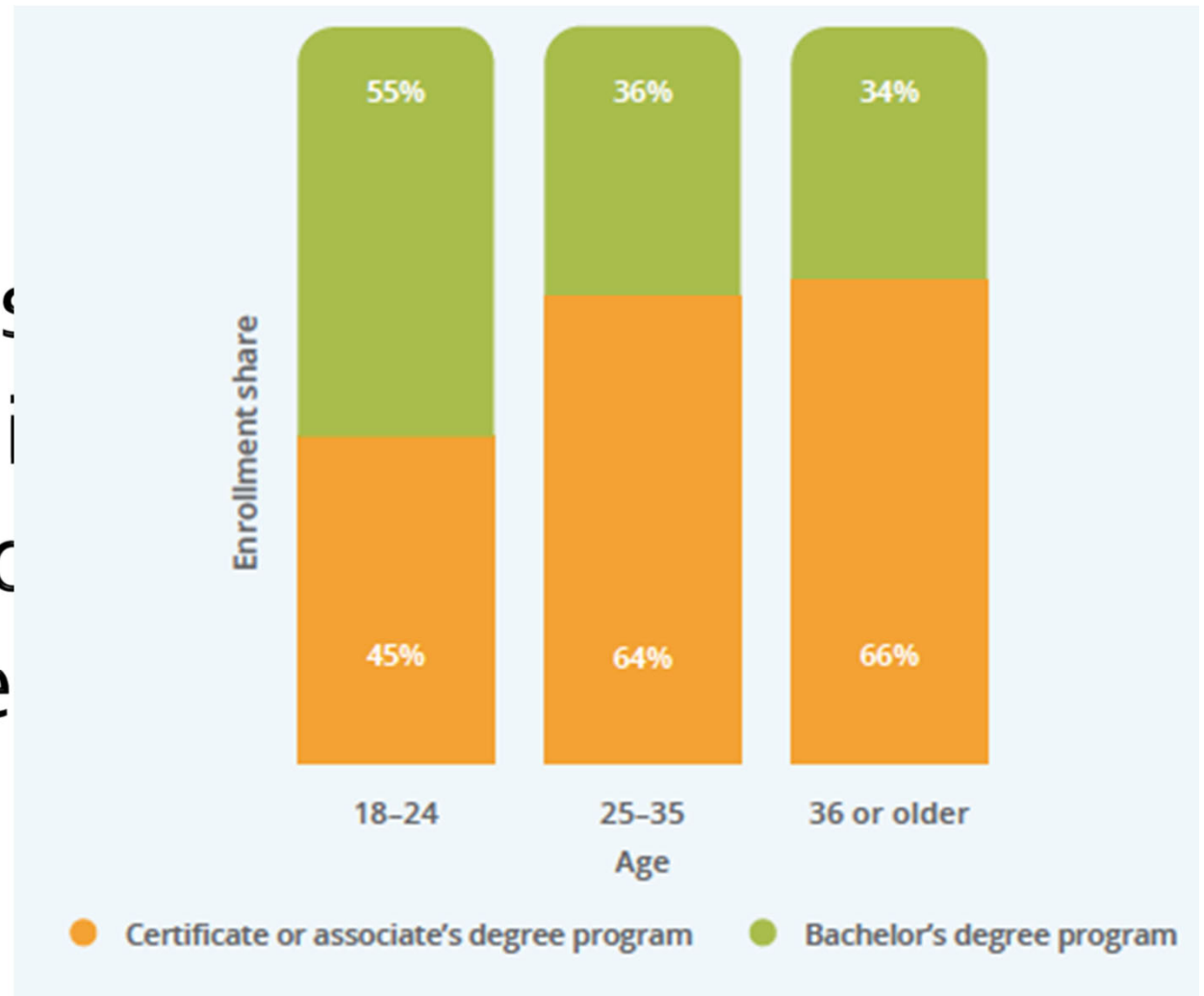
ANDREA, student parent of color at Portland State University (OR)

CEW RESEARCH

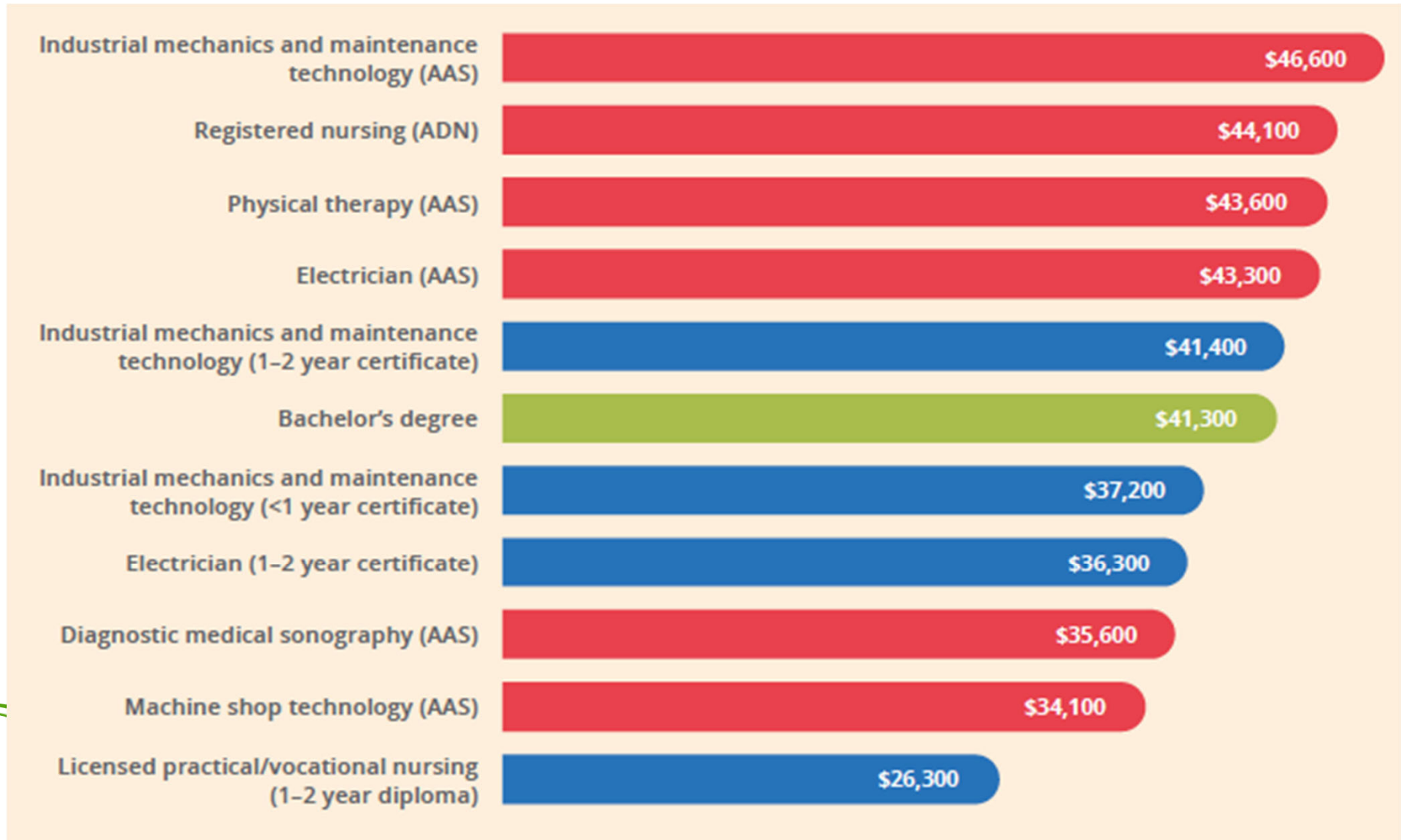
In Oregon, older certificate holders experience a sharp decline in earnings & then a gradual recovery



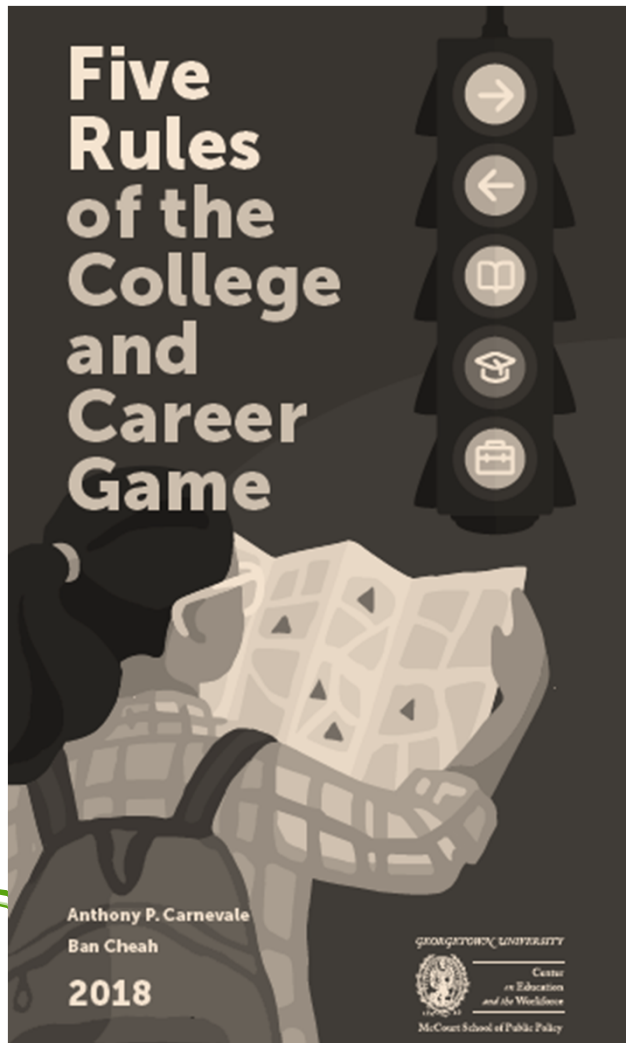
Among undergrads, older students largely enroll in certificate and associate's degree programs



Electricians, physical therapists, and RNs earn slightly more per year than the average BA holder in Kentucky



New rules for our modern economy



1 Education level matters

2 Majors matter more

3 Earnings vary greatly within majors

4 Less education can be worth more

5 Humanities and liberal arts majors never catch up in earnings

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY & PRACTICE

What we know about adult learners

- ▶ Growing proportion of **today's students**
- ▶ Prior **work** experience
- ▶ Wide variety of **postsecondary** experiences
- ▶ Absolutely critical to reaching **attainment goals**

Questions to ask about all credentials

- ▶ How much does the program **cost**?
- ▶ Does the credential lead **students** to **jobs**?
- ▶ Are those **jobs** related to the **field of study**?
- ▶ How much do workers with the credential **earn**?

Policy recommendations

- ▶ Build student **pathways** from certificate programs to associate's and bachelor's degree programs
- ▶ Increase transparency about **postcollege outcomes**, including employment and earnings
- ▶ Collect data on **pre- and post-college earnings**, at least at the state level
- ▶ Tailor **student aid** to different types of students

Additional resources

- ▶ Higher Learning Advocates [Today's Student Coalition](#)
- ▶ Pathways Collaborative [Voices of Pathways Film Series](#)
- ▶ NASPA, Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education's [Five Things Student Affairs Professionals Can Do to Support Adult Learners](#)
- ▶ Workcred, APLU, and UPCEA partnership to [embed certifications in degree programs](#)

Being **student-centered** is a philosophy. It needs to spread much farther into state & federal policymaking, institutional policies and practices, & research in order to address our **separate and unequal** education and workforce systems.

Everyone must play a role to help students navigate from **K-12 to college to careers**.

Q & A

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Thank you!