

# Community colleges: Indispensable before and after Covid-19

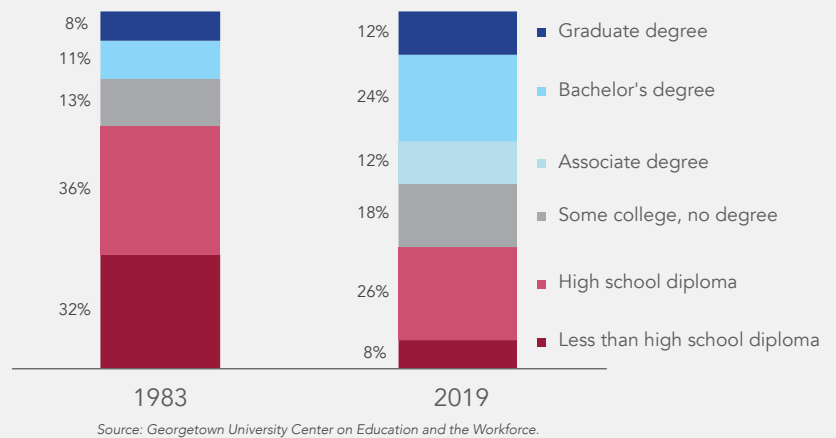
As the nation emerges from the pandemic, no institution is better positioned to help Americans get back to work than two-year community and technical colleges. A new report, **The Indispensable Institution**, outlines how community colleges can live up to their potential as America's premier provider of workforce education.

## 1 Covid is hastening the arrival of what was once called the "future of work."

Automation and artificial intelligence are transforming the workplace, requiring more sophisticated skills – technical skills but also problem solving, creativity, communication and teamwork – from a larger and larger segment of the workforce.

Two-thirds of all jobs require some postsecondary education or training.

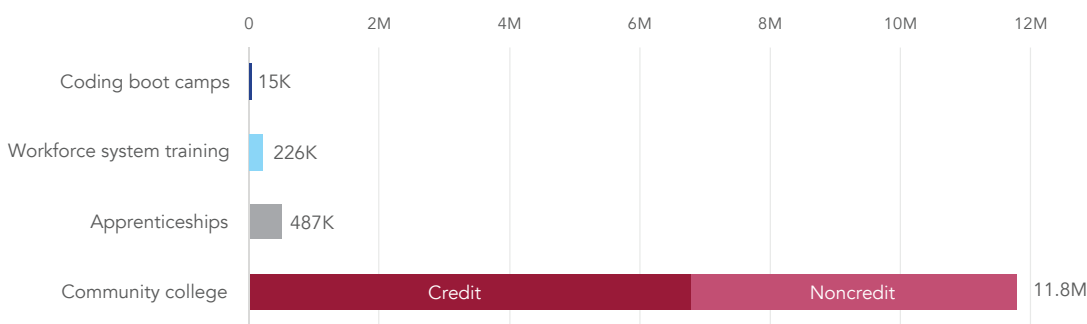
JOB'S BY EDUCATION REQUIREMENT, 1983 AND 2019



## 2 Many community colleges already put a premium on career-focused education and training.

They have a long track record of innovating quickly and nimbly to meet the needs of learners and employers. And only community colleges have the infrastructure – size, reach and training resources – to provide upskilling on the scale that will be needed for a robust recovery.

SUBBACCALAUREATE ENROLLMENT BY TYPE OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTION, 2018



Most career-focused learners attend community college.

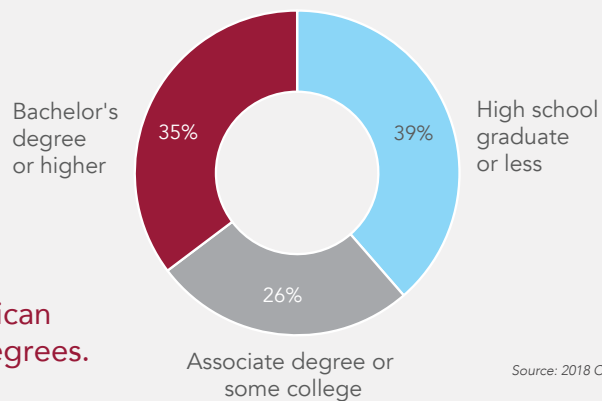
Sources: Course Report, August 2019; US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, March 2020; US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, 2019; and American Association of Community Colleges, 2020.



### 3 The promise of equal opportunity hinges on access to postsecondary education – including, for many, job-focused career and technical education.

Community colleges need to put workforce skills more at the center of their mission and culture. They need to rethink what they teach and how they teach it to better serve midcareer adult learners. The best programs will be offered in collaboration with local companies – employers who help design courses and stand ready to hire graduates.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, ADULTS 25 AND OLDER, 2018

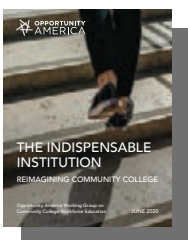


Only 35 percent of American adults have bachelor's degrees.

Source: 2018 Current Population Survey.

## Can community colleges live up to their potential as America's indispensable institution?

The first step is embracing their mission as the nation's primary provider of job-focused education and training. A group of leading educators and education policy thinkers proposes a road map for reform.



Read the report at:  
[www.opportunityamericaonline.org/indispensable](http://www.opportunityamericaonline.org/indispensable)