

# The Role of Certificates and Certifications in Attainment



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# Overview

- Growth and importance of certificates
- Equity implications
- Non-degree credential definitions & estimates
- Measuring credential stock and flow
- What we know so far on certifications



JOBS. SKILLS. EQUITY.



# Certificates in historical perspective

**2001** National Household Education Surveys

**2008** Lumina Foundation Goal 2025

**2009** Goal 2020 & Brookings event on sub-BA

**2010** Gainful Employment regulations

**2012** Survey of Income & Program Participation

2008-12: Going from “**didn’t know what we didn’t know**” to  
“**figuring out what we don’t know**” – Jeff Strohl



# Certificates in historical perspective

**2012** CEW *Certificates* report

**2012-present** GEMEnA

**2016** CEW certificate estimates in *Stronger Nation*

**2016** Adult Training and Education Survey

2011–present: State postsecondary attainment goal-setting that includes certificates



# What's a certificate?

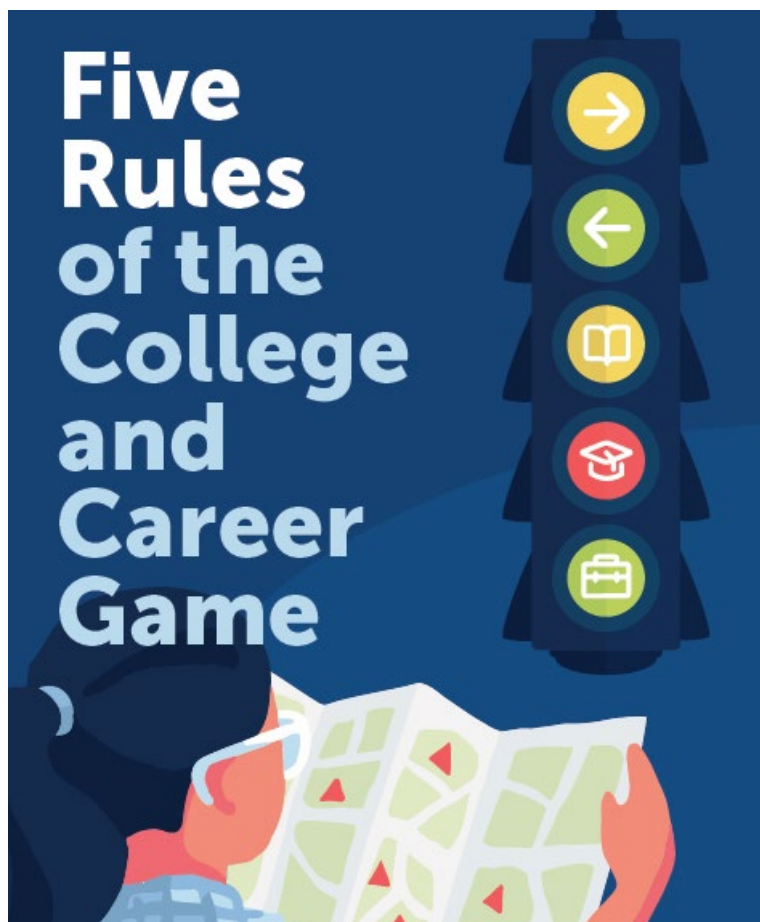


A certificate is a credential awarded by an educational institution based on completion of all requirements for a program of study.

Certificates are awarded mainly by public, two-year schools or private, for-profit, non-degree granting business, technical, and trade schools.



# Less education can be worth more.



**MEDIAN EARNINGS COMPARISON BY EDUCATION LEVEL & FIELD OF STUDY**





# Young and older certificate holders

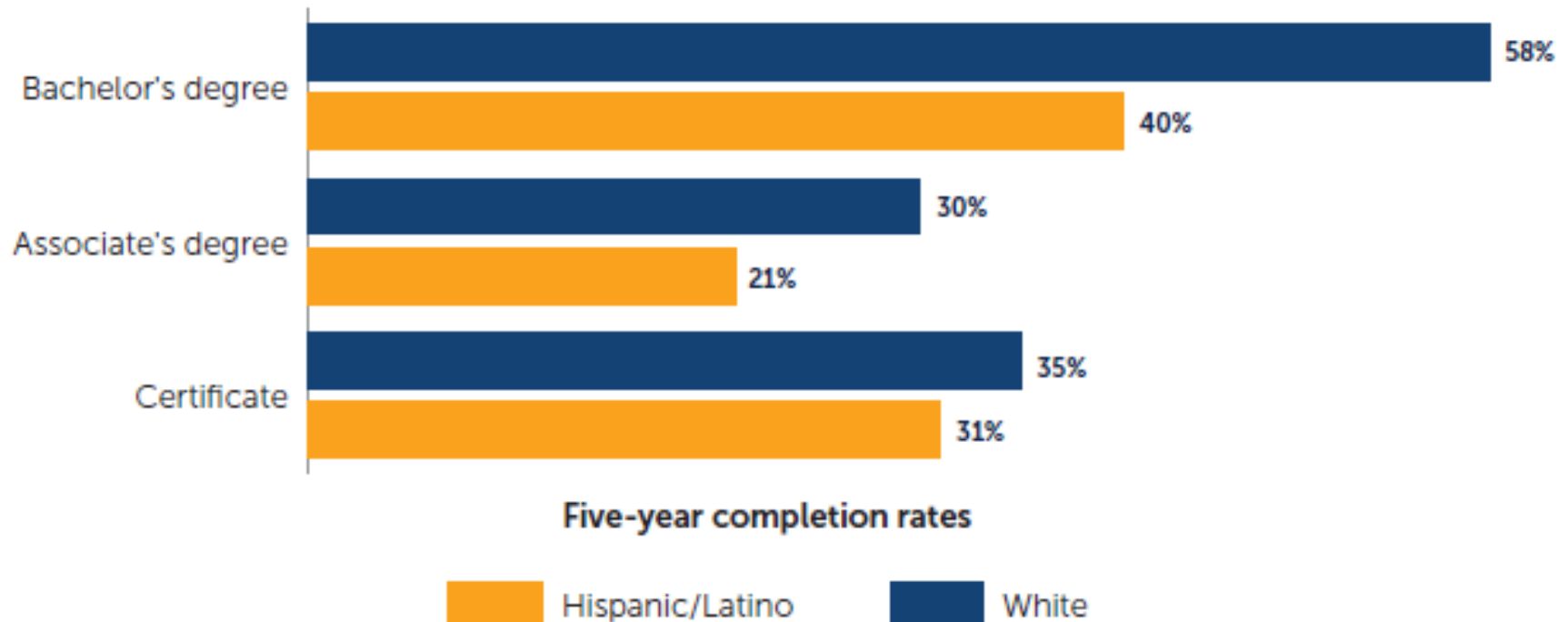


**Young certificate holders** benefit from strong earnings growth as they build their skills, gain work experience, and become established in the workforce.

**Older certificate holders** sustain a steep earnings decline followed by a rebound in pay.



# White and Latino certificate holders



**Rocky Mountain Divide**

Lifting Latinos and Closing Equity Gaps in Colorado





# Equity implications of certificates

## State leaders need to ask:

- Who's getting them (age, gender, race, SES)?
- Where are they working?
- What do they earn?
- How can we make it easier for them to come back for more?



# MEASURING & ESTIMATING CERTIFICATES

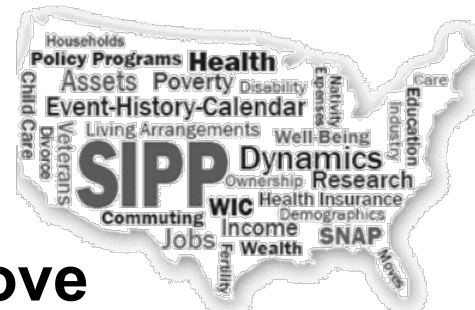


# Defining our terms: stock, flow and value of certificates



# How did CEW count certificates?

- 1** Number of certificate holders (SIPP)  
↓
- 2** How many earn 20 percent or more above high school median earnings (by gender)?  
↓
- 3** Percent of certificates with earnings premium by ~20 aggregated fields of study  
↓
- 4** SIPP total allocated to states using share of IPEDS certificate production by field of study



# How did CEW check the results?

	SCND with 20% earnings premium (CPS)	Share with a certificate having a 20% earnings premium (CEW)	Certificate estimate w/in share of SCND with an earnings premium?
Colorado	8%	6%	yes
Indiana	9%	5%	yes
Mississippi	8%	5%	yes
Virginia	7%	4%	yes



# How can states go further with this analysis?

- Look at production **over time**
- Consider various thresholds for labor market value (10% earnings premium for some certificates) & consider how certificates can lead to **further education & training**





# Keep in mind

Our baseline estimates measure the stock of certificates. Tracking progress is mostly about measuring flow.



States are measuring prevalence, annual production, and labor market value of non-degree credentials



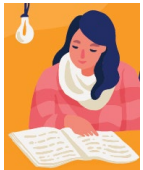
# Certificate estimating is evolving



**Investigate** what CEW and other states have done



**Tap** into your state administrative data



**Conduct** qualitative research on how certificates are connected to jobs



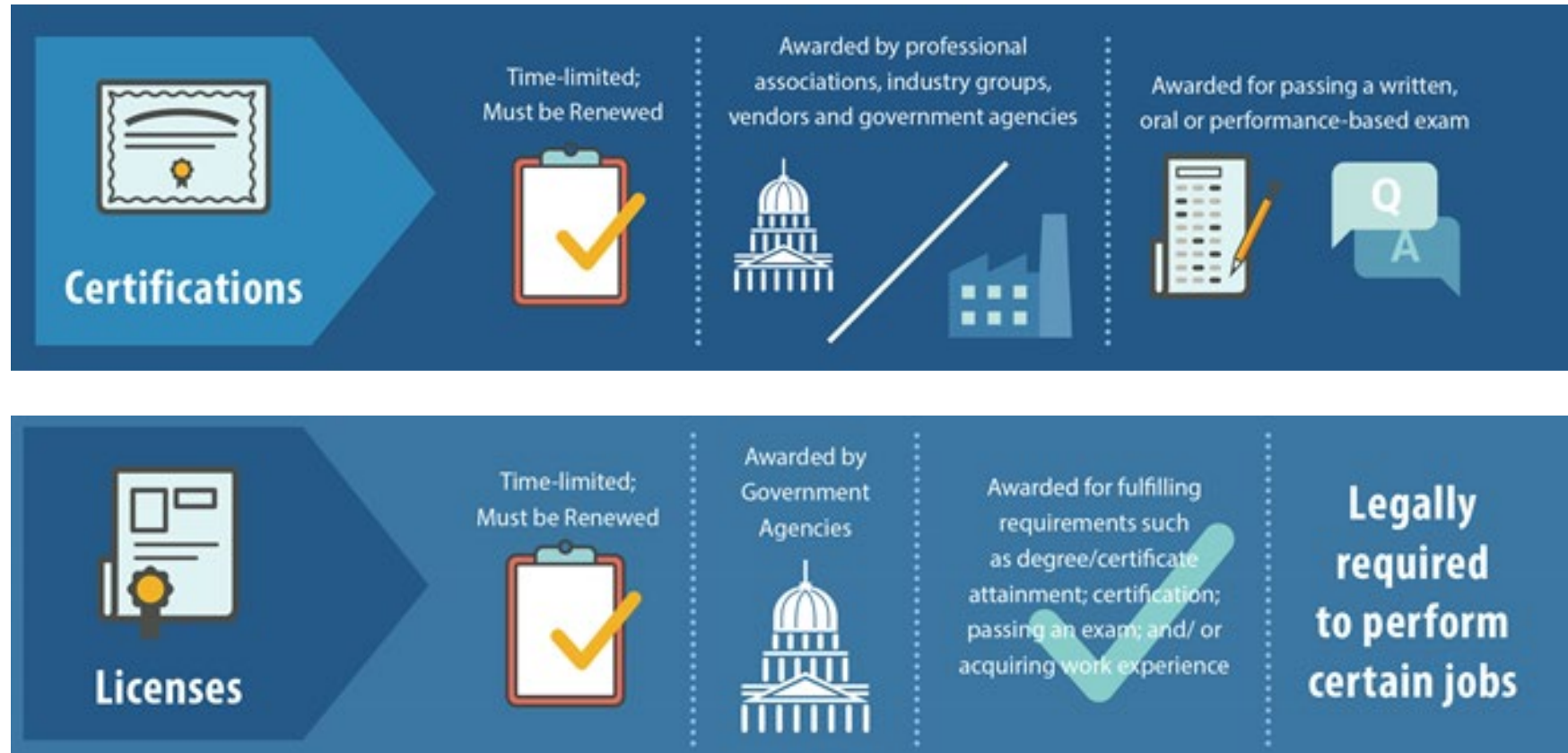
**Keep an eye out** for upcoming national survey data



# **WHAT WE KNOW SO FAR ABOUT ALTERNATIVE CREDENTIALS**



# Certifications and licenses



# Licenses are more widely held than certifications

**6%**

**of U.S. adults  
have an  
industry or  
occupational  
certification**

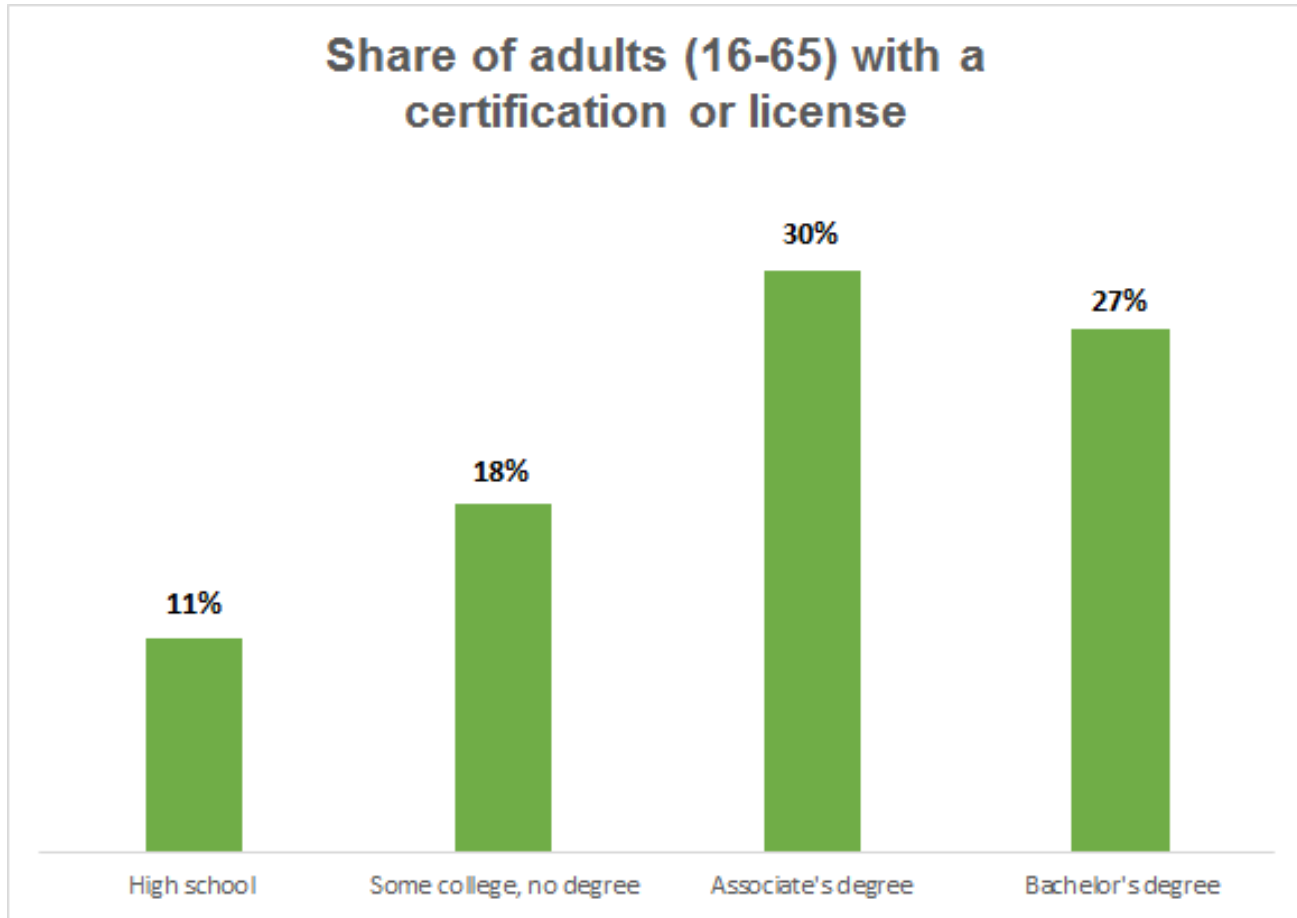
**18%**

**nearly one  
out of five  
adults holds  
a license**

Source: Adult Training and Education Survey, First Look, 16-65 year olds, 2016.



# Having an alternative credential is closely related to education level



Source: Adult Training and Education Survey, First Look, 2016.





# More Information

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