

# Student Success in the Workforce: An Update on Job Placement



Are Virginia's community colleges living up to their aspirational mission statement of giving "everyone the opportunity to learn and develop the right skills so lives and communities are strengthened"? This snapshot examines that question by following students into the workplace after they leave VCCS colleges.

## Study Population

This study focuses on 53,589 "exiters" - students who were enrolled in credit instruction at a VCCS institution in spring 2010 and subsequently "exited" college, or were not enrolled in a two- or four- year institution in fall 2010. Of those exiting, 51% attended a college transfer program and 49% were in a career technical field.

## Methodology

Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records from Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia were examined to assess VCCS students' job placement and wage earnings over three points in time - spring 2010 (the point of exit), fall 2010 (six months later) and fall 2012 (two years later).

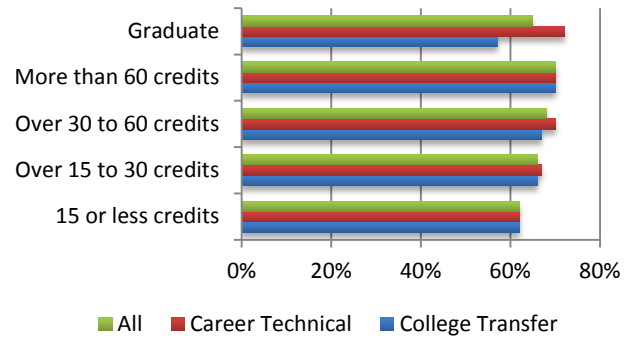
## Population Outcomes

- Over 53,000 students exited a VCCS institution in spring 2010. Approximately two-thirds (65%) of exiting students were employed upon exit, 65% were employed six months later, and 61% were employed two years later.
- Of those students employed upon exit in spring 2010, 71% retained employment for one year; 58% retained employment over the following two years.
- 72% of students graduating with degrees in career technical fields were employed within six months, compared with 57% of students graduating from college transfer fields.
- As a group, students who earned 60 credits or more had the highest rates of employment (70%) within 6 months and the highest median wage within two years (\$6,992). Nearly two-thirds of these students were aged 25 or older, indicating that their higher wages may be partially attributable to the amount of time they have been in the workforce.
- Although starting with lower wages initially, graduates had the highest wage gain (59%) in six months and saw a median wage increase of \$2,759 after two years.
- College transfer students exiting in spring 2010 saw their median income increase \$788 after six months and \$1,355 after two years; career technical students saw their median income increase \$1,192 after six months and \$1,863 after two years.

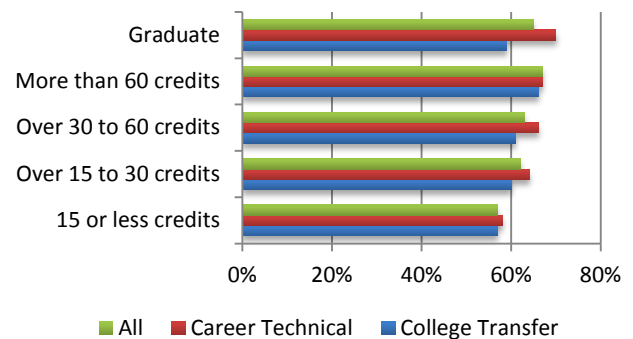
## Conclusions

Students who left Virginia's Community Colleges in spring 2010 experienced wage gains within the first six months and after two years. This snapshot of credit students reflects similar findings from recent SCHEV research on VCCS graduates. While job placement services are inconsistent across Virginia's Community Colleges, the colleges play a critical role in economic development and assuring individuals develop employability skills.

**Rates of Employment in Six Months for Spring 2010 Exiters by Credits Earned and Curriculum Type**



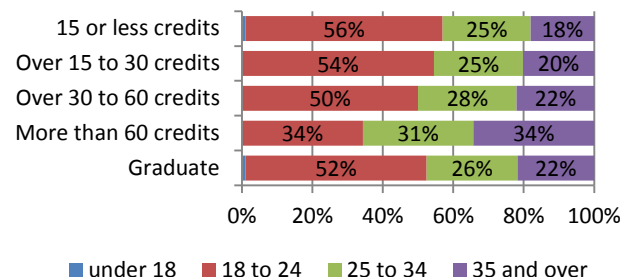
**Rates of Employment in Two Years for Spring 2010 Exiters by Credits Earned and Curriculum Type**



**Comparison of Median Quarterly Wages by Credits Earned and Graduation**

Median Quarterly Wages By Credits Earned	15 or less credits	Over 15 to 30 credits	Over 30 to 60 credits	More than 60 credits	Graduate
Spring 2010	\$3,548	\$3,880	\$4,398	\$5,670	\$3,422
In Six Months	\$4,261	\$4,812	\$5,411	\$6,365	\$5,441
In Two Years	\$4,817	\$5,438	\$6,019	\$6,992	\$6,181

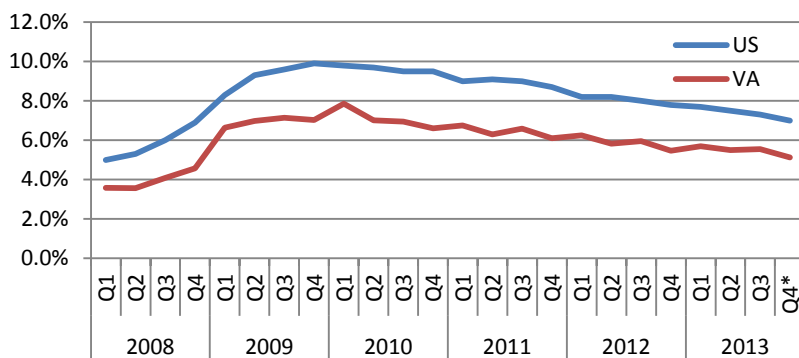
**Age Distribution of Exiters by Credits Earned**



**RATES OF QUARTERLY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES EARNED FOR SPRING 2010 EXITERS  
IN SIX MONTHS AND TWO YEARS, WITH ONE- AND TWO-YEAR RETENTION RATES**

College	Exiters	Quarterly Employment Rates and Median Wages for Spring 2010 Exiters						Employed in Spring 2010  N	Employed in Spring 2010 and Retained Employment	
		Spring 2010	In Six Months	In Two Years	Spring 2010	In Six Months	In Two Years		In One Year	In Two Years
		%	%	%	Median	Median	Median		%	%
Blue Ridge	1,294	72	70	68	\$3,200	\$4,400	\$5,100	935	73	62
Central Virginia	1,366	71	74	72	\$3,700	\$4,700	\$5,500	972	78	65
Dabney S. Lancaster	373	73	72	68	\$2,900	\$4,600	\$4,600	273	67	58
Danville	1,229	55	58	59	\$2,700	\$3,700	\$4,500	677	66	51
Eastern Shore	321	67	65	60	\$2,700	\$4,200	\$4,100	215	59	46
Germanna	1,946	71	70	63	\$3,800	\$4,500	\$5,500	1,376	72	58
J. Sargeant Reynolds	4,175	71	72	70	\$4,100	\$4,900	\$5,600	2,968	76	64
John Tyler	2,221	69	69	67	\$3,800	\$5,000	\$5,700	1,523	74	62
Lord Fairfax	1,639	70	70	64	\$3,400	\$4,600	\$5,500	1,151	72	58
Mountain Empire	855	56	56	53	\$2,900	\$3,800	\$4,400	480	67	49
New River	1,270	65	70	68	\$2,900	\$4,000	\$4,800	826	71	61
Northern Virginia	13,265	61	61	53	\$5,200	\$6,300	\$6,900	8,148	68	55
Patrick Henry	1,038	58	66	61	\$3,200	\$3,900	\$4,400	599	74	57
Paul D. Camp	547	66	65	65	\$3,100	\$4,100	\$4,800	360	71	61
Piedmont Virginia	1,346	71	71	69	\$3,600	\$4,900	\$5,700	956	75	62
Rappahannock	741	68	69	66	\$3,200	\$4,100	\$4,900	504	72	59
Southside Virginia	1,602	60	65	64	\$2,900	\$3,900	\$4,600	958	71	58
Southwest Virginia	1,257	57	62	56	\$3,600	\$4,400	\$5,200	715	70	54
Thomas Nelson	3,154	65	62	60	\$3,700	\$4,700	\$5,100	2,044	68	57
Tidewater	10,290	63	61	58	\$3,800	\$4,500	\$5,100	6,466	71	57
Virginia Highlands	665	58	58	57	\$2,800	\$4,400	\$4,400	383	67	53
Virginia Western	2,024	72	73	71	\$3,500	\$4,800	\$5,200	1,450	75	63
Wytheville	971	62	65	68	\$3,300	\$4,700	\$5,400	603	75	68
VCCS Total	53,589	65	65	61	\$3,800	\$4,800	\$5,400	34,582	71	58

**United States and Virginia Unemployment Rates, 2008-2013**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. \* - Q4 of 2013 based on preliminary data

**Previous Research**

Information on students' placement and wage information was previously produced in Student Success Snapshot #12: An Initial View of Student Success in the Workforce (February 2010).

- Visit <http://www.vccs.edu/studentsuccess> to learn more about student success.

**How Were Data Generated?**

CRT tables were used to produce demographic and enrollment data. Graduate files were used to determine graduation information. National Student Clearinghouse data were used to determine enrollment in higher education. Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage data from the Virginia Employment Commission were matched to VCCS student files to provide employment rates and wage calculations.