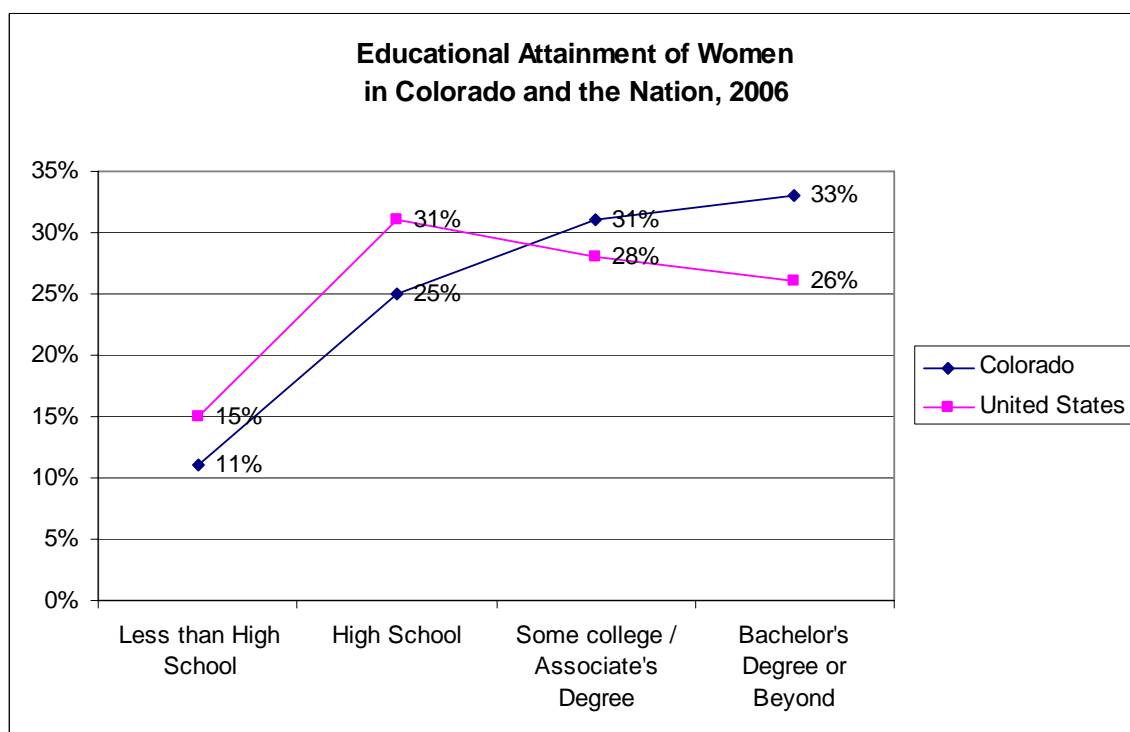


Colorado Women Outpacing National Average In Educational Attainment

Colorado women are surpassing the national average for women in terms of educational attainment, according to data from the 2006 American Community Survey¹ produced by the United States Census Bureau. Most notably, 64 percent of women in Colorado have obtained education beyond a high school diploma, compared with 54 percent nationwide. And while on average 15 percent of women in the United States overall have earned less than a high school diploma, this is true for only 11 percent of Colorado women:



Just over a quarter (26%) of women in the United States overall have earned a bachelor's degree, while fully a third (33%) of Colorado women have done so, and like their sisters nationwide, a third of these women have gone on to earn graduate or professional degrees.

A 2005 study based in New England² revealed that “nationally, the percentage of adult women with four-year college degrees [increased] from 8 percent in 1970 to 24 percent in 2000” (p.17). Clearly, this trend is continuing.

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In the 2007 report *The Family: America's Smallest School*³, Barton and Coley reported that children whose mothers have achieved higher levels of educational attainment are more likely to have a parent read to them on a daily basis than their peers whose mothers have lower levels of educational attainment. The 2007 report *Literacy in Everyday Life*⁴ further reported that parents who have achieved higher levels of educational attainment are consequently more likely to achieve higher levels of literacy, to read to their children five or more days a week, and to participate in their children's education in other ways as well.

The benefits to children of parental involvement in their education are well documented. A January 2008 research report indicates that "parents are instrumental to their children's academic success and ... parental involvement has a positive impact on student achievement"⁵. Previous LitScans have reported on other quality-of-life variables related to adult educational attainment, including household income⁶ and health care status⁷.

Encouraging women in their educational pursuits and providing educational opportunities for women is all to the good, not only in their lives, but also in the lives of their children.

SOURCES:

¹U. S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey. Available online at <http://www.census2010.gov/acs/www/>

²Gittel, R., Churilla, A., and Griffin, A.M. (2005). Mismatch: For New England women, earning lags learning. *Connection: The Journal of the New England Board of Higher Education*, 19 (5), 17-19. Available online at http://pubpages.unh.edu/~rgittel/Gittel%20et%20al%20Connection_Spri.pdf

³Barton, P.E., and Coley, R.J. (2007). *The Family: America's Smallest School*. Available online at www.ets.org/familyreport/

⁴Literacy in Everyday Life: Results from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy. Available online at <http://nces.ed.gov/Pubs2007/2007480.pdf>

⁵Stewart, E. B. (2008). School Structural Characteristics, Student Effort, Peer Associations, and Parental Involvement: The Influence of School- and Individual- Level Factors on Academic Achievement. *Education and Urban Society*, 40 (2).

⁶Colorado Literacy Research Initiative (CLRI) LitScan (2004). *Lower Adult Educational Attainment Increases the Odds of Lower – and Declining – Household Income*, 8 (6). Available online at http://literacyresearch.org/download/litscan86_ed_income.pdf

⁷Colorado Literacy Research Initiative (CLRI) LitScan (2007). *Health Care Status Strongly Influenced by Adult Educational Attainment*, 11(8). Available online at http://literacyresearch.org/download/LitScan_vol_11_08.pdf