

Utah Women's College Task Force

Governor's Education Excellence Commission

Benefits for Homemakers:

- Give birth to healthier babies
- Children are healthier
- Are involved in the political process
- Are healthier, more confident, less depressed
- Are more likely to be involved in the community
- Have improved reasoning and judgment
- Maintain higher ethical and moral standards
- Experience an increased quality of life
- Take leadership roles

Reality for Most Women:

- More than half of the women (59%) in Utah with pre-school age children work.
- An overwhelming majority (74%) of those with school-age children work.
- Poverty is a significant problem for one-parent households headed by women.
- Many are not prepared with the higher education necessary to enter the workforce.

Governor's "Big Goal":

By the year 2020, 66% of Utahns ages 20-64 will have a postsecondary degree or certificate.

- 53% of Utahns will need an associate's degree or higher.
- 13% will need a postsecondary certificate that leads to a livable wage.

Why Work to Achieve this Goal?

- Utah's economy and the state as a whole cannot develop as well or as fully without an educated citizenry.
- Utah is below the national average for college completion with only 37.5% of its citizens age 25 and over with an associate degree or higher*. The US is lagging behind leading nations that have 60%.



Why Focus on Women?

- Utah women's attainment of bachelor's degrees is behind that of men and women nationwide (25.5% for Utah women vs. 31.6% for Utah men, which is 2% less than their national peers).
- The trend for Utah women completing a postsecondary certificate or degree is in the wrong direction; a smaller percentage of Utah women are achieving this education goal each year.
- There are important benefits for all women who complete post-secondary education, including those who intend to be full-time homemakers and mothers.
- To reach the "Big Goal", the gap between the educational attainment of Utah men and women will need to be closed.

To Reverse the Trend:

The Utah Women's College Task Force Works to Change Attitudes

- Utahns generally recognize the economic benefits of higher education for someone intending to enter the workforce, but don't recognize other significant benefits that accrue to individuals, families, and communities when women who are homemakers and mothers complete a postsecondary credential.
- **Benefits for Homemakers:** Higher education provides important benefits to women who intend to be homemakers and mothers. Some of these benefits are listed in the sidebar of this page and on the reverse.
- **Reality for Most Women:** Even for women who intend to be homemakers, sometimes "life happens," and because of this many mothers and homemakers find themselves in the workplace. (Facts on left)

* American Community Survey 2009, single-year estimates.

Did You Know...

- Utah has a higher divorce rate than the national average?
- a higher percentage of Utah women work outside the home when compared to the national average (62% vs. 60%)?
- almost one-third of female-headed households live in poverty?
- most women who work are married?
- a young woman today can expect to spend more than 30 years in the labor force?
- most women at one time or another will need to support themselves and/or their families?
- completing a post-secondary degree or certificate is the most likely way for women to improve statistics in each of these areas?

Some information for this Fact Sheet was obtained from the following sources:

- The HigherEdUtah 2020 Master Plan
- Department of Workforce Services
- www.Prosperty2020.com
- Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
- The Utah Women and Education Project (www.uvu.edu/wep)

Potential Outcomes for Educated Women

Research has shown that people who are more educated are more likely to receive the following benefits and more:

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- Live longer (on average)
- Have an overall healthier lifestyle (smoke less, exercise more, healthier diet, lower alcohol abuse, lower cholesterol levels, higher fiber intake)
- Are less overweight or obese
- Have increased life satisfaction and overall happiness
- Are more resilient and less depressed (better mental health)
- Obtain more resources to pay for health insurance

ECONOMIC

- Earn more money
- Have better job opportunities
- Gain access to better health care and related benefits
- Lower risk of unemployment
- Are better prepared to financially support self and family

INTELLECTUAL/COGNITIVE

- Better lifelong learning skills
- More intelligence/knowledge (e.g., English, science, math, social sciences, reading)
- Stronger teamwork and interpersonal skills
- Better skills at integrating ideas and concepts
- Stronger writing and verbal skills
- Higher critical, creative thinking and decision making skills
- Enhanced quantitative and analytic skills

The goal of the UWCTF is to raise the aspiration level of young women to complete postsecondary degrees and to help parents, families, and the general community understand how important it is to support and encourage Utah women to complete.

PARENTING

- Spend more time reading to their children
- Prepare children better academically for school
- Have children who participate in extracurricular activities
- Provide healthier lifestyles for their children
- Work higher paying, more flexible jobs
- Have more college-educated children who can better provide for self and families

CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Participate substantially more in civic and community activities (examples: voting, donating blood, leadership)
- More conscientious civic and community volunteer

SELF-DEVELOPMENT

- Improved self-understanding
- Greater independence and feelings of control in life
- Superior leadership skills
- Higher ethical and moral standards and reasoning
- More developed social skills
- Better self-concept/self-esteem
- More open to diversity and racial understanding
- Stronger reasoning and reflective judgment skills
- Stimulating occupations
- Increased quality of life