

# Benefits of Completing College

## SOCIETY

College graduates participate substantially more than their less educated peers in civic and community leadership and activities. Communities also benefit in numerous ways from an increasingly educated population.

**College-educated individuals are substantially more likely to be engaged in their communities.**

- College graduates are significantly more likely to volunteer in their communities than adults with only high school diplomas; the average number of volunteer hours increases with education level.
- College graduates are more likely to provide aid to people in their communities; this includes an increased likelihood of donating blood.

**Adults with higher levels of education are more likely to vote than those with lower levels.**

- Individuals with college degrees vote more often, and voting participation steadily increases with each year of education up through a bachelor's degree.
- According to the report *Goals for the Common Good*, college "instills greater acceptance of free speech and democratic values, more understanding of the issues on which we vote, and increased confidence in our ability to select able leaders."

**Communities with more educated residents have lower crime and incarceration rates.**

- Studies show a strong link between more educated communities and lower rates of violent crime. A one-year increase in the average level of schooling in a community is associated with almost a 30% decrease in the murder and assault rates.
- One study found that nearly 75% of Utah inmates had not completed high school at the time of incarceration and fewer than 3% had completed college.

**Society's economy benefits from more educated residents.**

- The increased earnings associated with more educated workers generate higher tax revenue at the local, state, and federal levels; governments also spend less on public assistance and social support programs.
- According to an *American Human Development Project* report, "Education is the single most important factor in the determination of a person's poverty status: almost 24 percent of the adult population without a high school diploma is poor" compared with only 3.6 percent of college graduates.

Higher education promotes more prepared and conscientious civic participants and community volunteers. Education provides the avenue out of poverty and benefits society at large.

[www.utahwomenandeducation.org](http://www.utahwomenandeducation.org)



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