

Education and income: More learning is key to higher earnings

Here's a finding you can bank on: The more education you get, the more money you are likely to earn. And usually, those extra earnings are more than pocket change.

Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics show that median earnings increase at every level of education. In 2005, as the chart illustrates, people who finished high school earned almost \$175 more every week compared with those who dropped out. People who completed an associate degree program netted more than \$100 compared with high school graduates.

But diplomas and degrees aren't the only routes to higher paychecks. Apprenticeships and other types of long-term on-the-job training also tend to increase earnings. Many occupations that usually require long-term training—such as machinist and electrician—also have median earnings comparable with those of college graduates.



Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage-and-salary workers aged 25 or older, 2005

