

Analysis of Education and Income in the U. S.

Josh Bley

Department of Geography, University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, MO 65211

Introduction

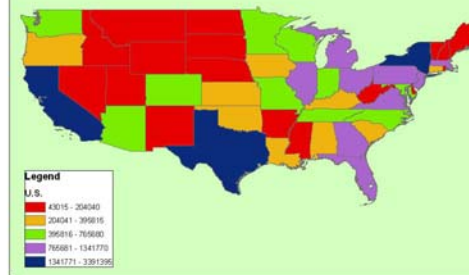
It is commonly known that obtaining a Bachelor's degree or higher will help someone reach a higher household income. The process of earning a Bachelor's degree is timely and expensive, so it logically follows that people want to make the most of their degree. Upon obtaining a degree where is the best location to earn a high household income? The analysis focuses primary on the comparison of a State's percent of people 25 years + that have a Bachelor's degree or higher with the State's median household income.



State	Population with Bachelor Degree	Percent of Population	Median Income
Alabama	329195	13.2	39768
Alaska	58025	16.3	45063
Arizona	439935	15.7	41749
Arkansas	175905	12	35394
California	3391395	17.7	50306
Colorado	57250	22.7	42237
Connecticut	358415	20.4	51283
Delaware	75080	17	43778
D.C.	74150	21.4	43058
Florida	1341770	15.4	40296
Georgia	809590	17.1	43128
Hawaii	128345	19.3	40561
Idaho	107185	15.3	38129
Illinois	1305875	18.6	45689
Indiana	468850	13.7	41169
Iowa	269170	16.8	36337
Kansas	275605	18.8	38560
Kentucky	261045	11.3	38972
Louisiana	320975	13.2	36930
Maine	118985	16.2	36409
Maryland	600385	19.6	47265
Massachusetts	828195	22.4	46926
Michigan	850850	15.2	46647
Minnesota	592545	21.2	42069
Mississippi	181280	11.8	34411
Missouri	491880	15.8	38482
Montana	93315	18.5	31389
Nebraska	172780	18.5	35435
Nevada	144910	12.3	41190
New Hampshire	144815	20	43511
New Jersey	1032020	21.3	51657
New Mexico	137030	13.8	36339
New York	1924870	17.7	46776
North Carolina	765680	16.5	39711
North Dakota	65100	18.9	31225
Ohio	968075	15.2	42249
Oklahoma	272940	14.5	34978
Oregon	344030	17.5	41766
Pennsylvania	1112830	16.3	42287
Rhode Island	106505	18.1	42397
South Carolina	323620	14.3	37763
South Dakota	70340	17.7	30749
Tennessee	459405	14	39293
Texas	1893285	16.4	42426
Utah	204040	17.4	41171
Vermont	70190	19.8	35534
Virginia	794915	19.6	44455
Washington	652845	19.2	45367
West Virginia	103285	10	34862
Wisconsin	510210	16.9	40408
Wyoming	43015	15.5	34381

Fig. 1 The spreadsheet produced from all the data collected from the Census Bureau.

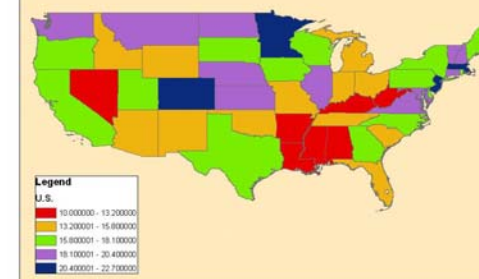
Population with Bachelor's Degree



Median Income



Percent of State Population



Conclusions

- All States were fairly similar
- Illinois, Minnesota, and Colorado were the three best states
- Future researcher: Try and incorporate cost of living into data to minimize error in results

Sources

- U.S. Census Bureau. 2006
<http://www.census.gov/2006>
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
<http://www.noaa.gov/>
- <http://www.city-data.com>

Acknowledgments

this work was conducted as part of Geography 4840 Geographic Information Systems I during Fall Semester 2008.

Methods

The first step in reaching a prediction involves gathering all the necessary data and comparing the information sets. Secondly, I will look for any relationships between the two data sets to determine if a prediction can be made from the information. Lastly, I will utilize the data and any found relationships to make a tentative prediction of the best location to obtain high household income with a Bachelor's degree.

I compiled data from the 2006 Census (25+ years old) of each state to include: the total population with bachelor's degree, median income, and percent of state population. I then joined the spreadsheet with the shapefile of the U.S. From this I produced three maps, which I analyzed to answer my question.

Results

After analysis of the data, all of the states were fairly similar to each other. Taking in the cost of living, I have choose three states that have high income for a degree. The three states are:

- Illinois
- Minnesota
- Colorado