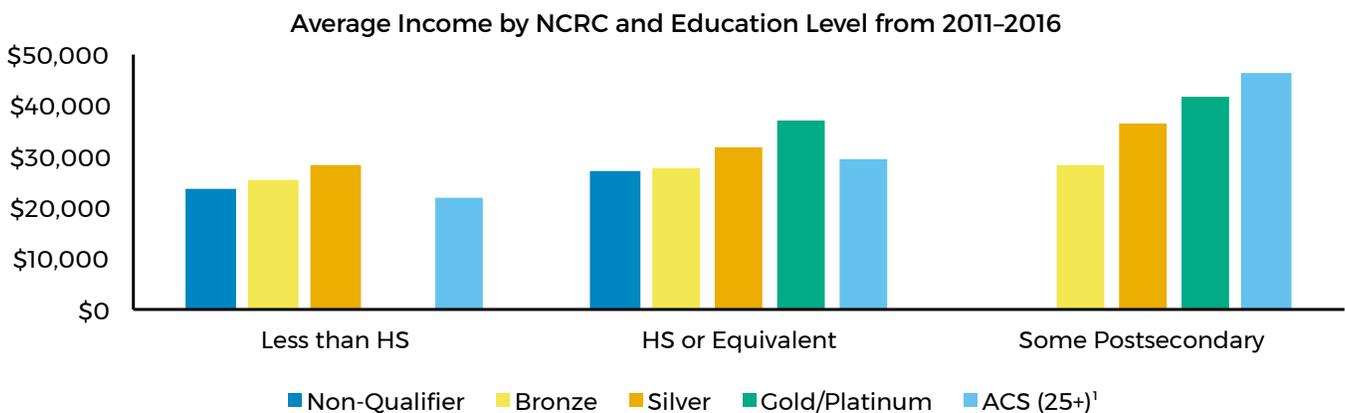


INCOME TRENDS for ACT NCRC EARNERS

HIGHER NCRC LEVELS are correlated to **HIGHER INCOME LEVELS**—new study reinforces previous ACT findings

Results

Performing well on the ACT® WorkKeys® Assessments and earning a higher WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate® (NCRC®) level can help people secure higher incomes in the short and long terms. Individuals who took WorkKeys in 2011 and earned an NCRC tended to increase their incomes at a rate much greater than national trends.



When comparing individuals with the same level of education, higher NCRC levels were consistently correlated to higher average incomes. The results confirm that the NCRC is a valuable signal of the foundational skills needed for career success.

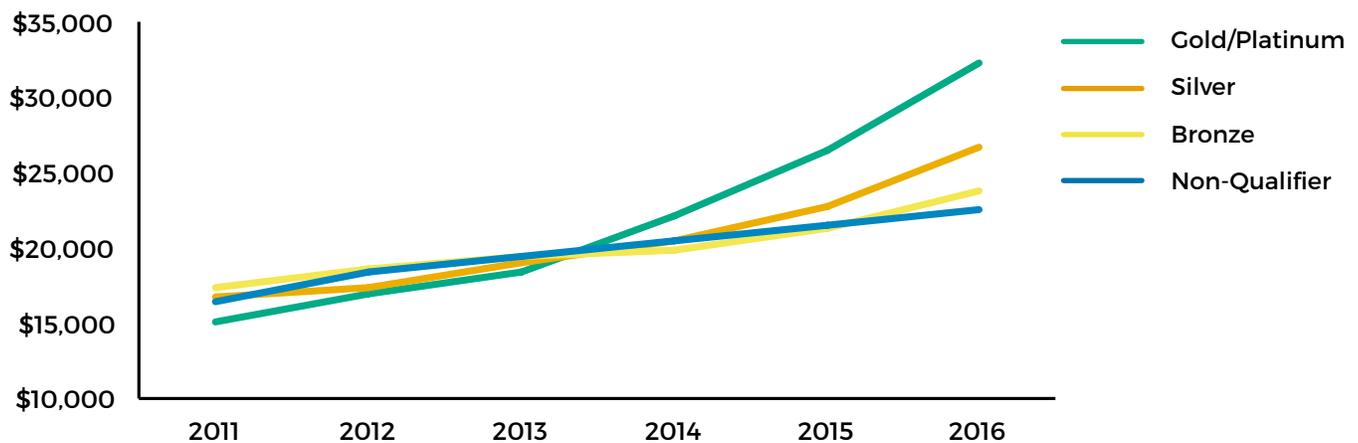
What's more, higher NCRC levels translate into higher increases in earning. In fact, adults with some postsecondary education earned approximately \$8,000 more with a Silver NCRC as compared to a Bronze NCRC, and roughly \$5,500 more with a Gold or Platinum NCRC as compared to a Silver.

Impacts for High School Testers

Students who took the ACT WorkKeys assessment in high school increased their income level in the years following. Short-term income trends were similar for all high school WorkKeys testers, but those who earned higher NCRC levels—especially Gold or Platinum—increased their incomes at a much faster rate starting three years after testing. The increase can be attributed to several factors, such as the value of the NCRC resulting in a higher paying job, higher NCRC earners seeking employment in higher paying industries, and seeking postsecondary training for higher paying jobs.

With this information, individuals can be confident that the NCRC is a valuable credential.

Median Income for High School Testers by NCRC Level

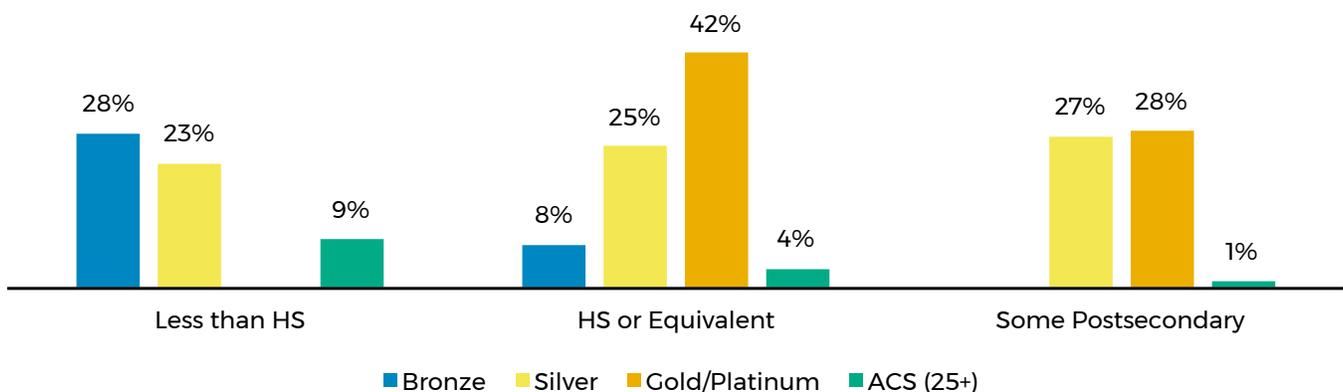


Impacts for Adult Testers

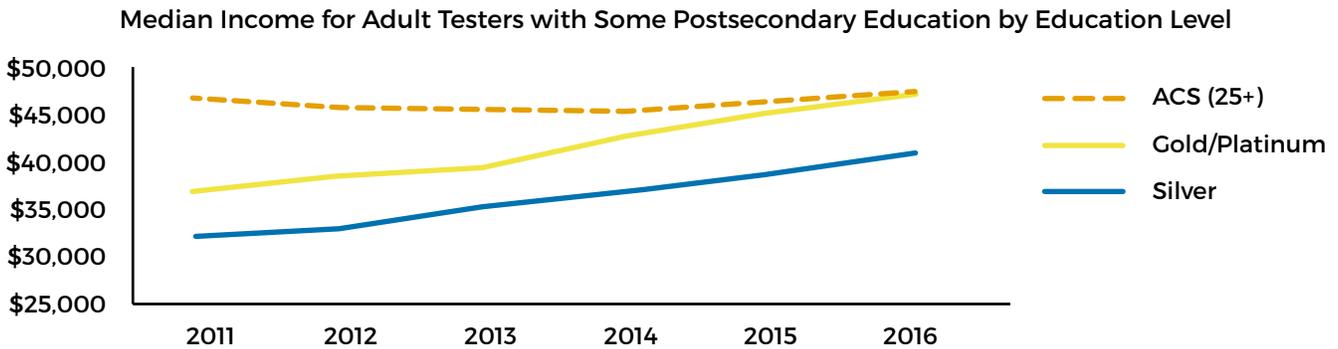
Adults who earned higher NCRC levels in 2011 tended to earn higher incomes and increase their incomes more in the five years after testing. Specifically, those who earned a Silver, Gold, or Platinum NCRC increased their median incomes within two years of taking WorkKeys. Moreover, income increases for NCRC earners outpaced national trends by a wide margin.

The relationship between NCRC level and income growth was particularly strong for those with a high school diploma. This group tended to have higher median incomes, and their incomes increased faster—dramatically exceeding the national trend.

2011-2016 Increases in Median Income



For adults with some postsecondary education, higher NCRC levels translated to steady increases in median incomes during the five years after taking the ACT WorkKeys assessments.



In all, these findings are consistent with the claim that performing well on WorkKeys and earning higher NCRC levels can help people secure higher incomes in the short- and long-term.

Conclusion

Foundational skills are vital to job performance, and the NCRC is a useful measure of the foundational skills needed for career advancement. Employers and workforce and economic developers alike can rely on the ACT WorkKeys assessment system to build a skilled workforce and boost the economic health of their community.

About ACT WorkKeys NCRC

The ACT WorkKeys Assessments are a collection of proctored tests which measure the most important workplace skills affecting an individual's job performance. A WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) is earned by completing the three WorkKeys Assessments, Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents, and is issued at four levels of achievement, Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. More than 4 million NCRCs have been issued in the United States as of December 2018.

Notes

1. National trends based on the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) for workers ages 25 and older.
2. ACT. (2017). *Employment Outcomes for ACT NCRC earners*. Iowa City, IA: ACT. Retrieved from act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/NCRC-Outcomes.pdf
3. Equifax's Work Number system collects week-by-week salary information, length of employment, job titles, and industry category. The Work Number is used by over 50,000 organizations, including government agencies (to verify employment and wages to determine eligibility for government assistance) and employers (to verify work history for a job candidate).
4. Data from the US Census Bureau's Factfinder (factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml) were weighted to reflect the distribution of regions and educational attainment in the study sample.

For the full report, please visit act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/R1714-income-trends-ncrc-2018-08.pdf