

NATIVE HAWAIIAN WELL-BEING

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KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

Post-High Update 2011:

Native Hawaiians in Post-Secondary Education

By Bill Speck and RaeDeen Keahiolalo-Karasuda

Introduction

Research indicates that on average, workers with college degrees earn more than those without a college education. Over the course of a lifetime, an individual with a bachelor's degree can earn 75 percent more than someone with only a high school diploma (Wakelyn 2009). The advantages, however, do not stop at economics. Studies show that college graduates have better access to quality healthcare, engage in civic activities more often, have a higher competitive advantage in market systems, and have greater access to leisure (Dee 2004; Ross and Wu 1996; Winkleby, Jatulis, Frank, and Fortmann 1992). Further, the demand for college graduates in the workplace continues to increase. Since the 1990s, the number of employed workers with at least some college has increased by 32 percent (Carnevale 2008).

Kamehameha Schools' (KS) commitment to creating educational opportunities to improve the capability and well-being of people of Hawaiian ancestry, and to prepare them to become good and industrious men and women, is at the center of its programs and services.¹ This commitment, to support students through critical transitions in their educational journey, extends beyond high school to include college-preparation through its campuses, programs, and community collaborations.

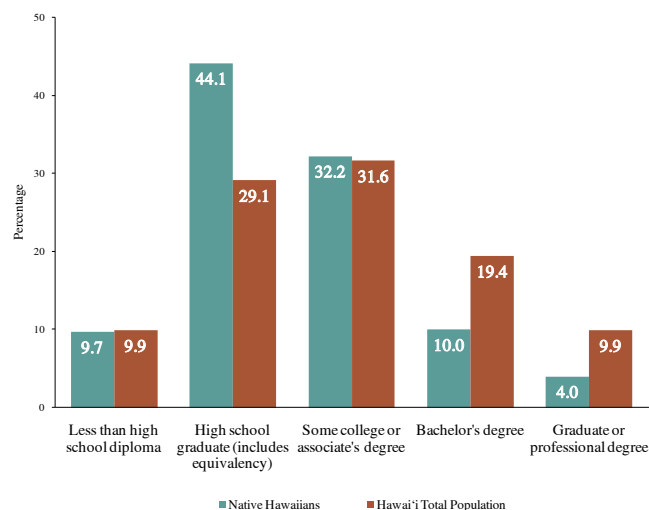
This annual update provides current counts, estimates, and descriptions of Native Hawaiian post-secondary education and labor market activity to inform planning, research, and understanding.²

Post-Secondary Education

Figure 1 illustrates the level of education obtained by Hawaiians beyond high school. Native Hawaiians stop their educational journey after receiving a high school diploma with greater frequency than non-Hawaiians. More than three-quarters (76.3 percent) of Native Hawaiian adults 25 years or older complete high school but do not earn a bachelor's degree. It is estimated that 74 percent of all future jobs require some type of post-secondary education or industry certification (Wakelyn 2009) with most of those jobs requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a bachelor's degree (Holzer and Lerman 2009). The opportunity for the large group of non-degreed Native Hawaiian adults to improve their economic well-being through education exists by attaining not only bachelor's degrees but associate's degrees and

certificates from two-year colleges as well. Overall, as a catalyst for increased opportunities, post-secondary education is essential. Given that “postsecondary education and training have become the nation’s workforce qualification and development system outside the workplace...” (Carnevale, Strohl, and Smith 2009), the significance of post-secondary education for Native Hawaiians cannot be overstated.

Figure 1. Educational Attainment, Adults 25 years and older, State of Hawai‘i (2007–09 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates)



- Statewide, only 46.2 percent of Native Hawaiians have received some level of post-high school education compared with approximately 60.9 percent for Hawai‘i overall, resulting in a 14.7 percentage-point gap.
- When considering college completion, 14.0 percent of Native Hawaiians have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher, which is less than half the rate estimated by the state overall.

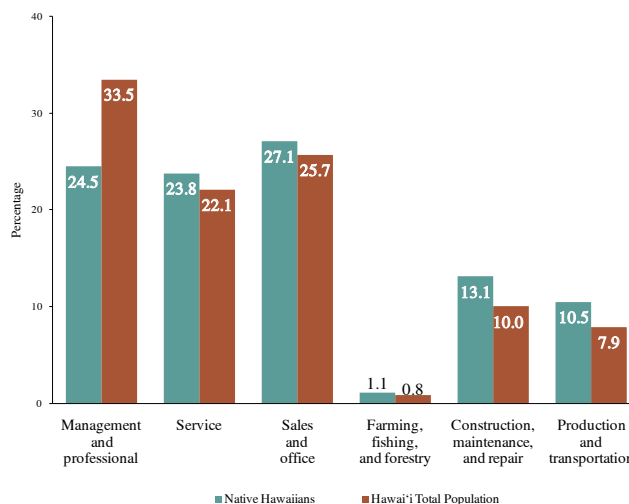
Native Hawaiians experience a 14.7 percentage-point gap in post-high educational attainment in comparison to the state average.

Labor Force

The civilian labor force is the sum total of employed and unemployed individuals 16 years old and older, who are not confined to institutions or on active military duty. Figures 2 and 3 reveal that Native Hawaiians are less represented in professional and management positions than non-Hawaiians. Post-secondary education and training offer increased opportunities for Native

Hawaiians to enter into these positions. For example, internships or nonacademic work-based learning opportunities allow students to build 21st-Century skills while attending college.

Figure 2. Occupational Distribution, Civilian Employed, 16 years and older, State of Hawai‘i (2007–09 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates)

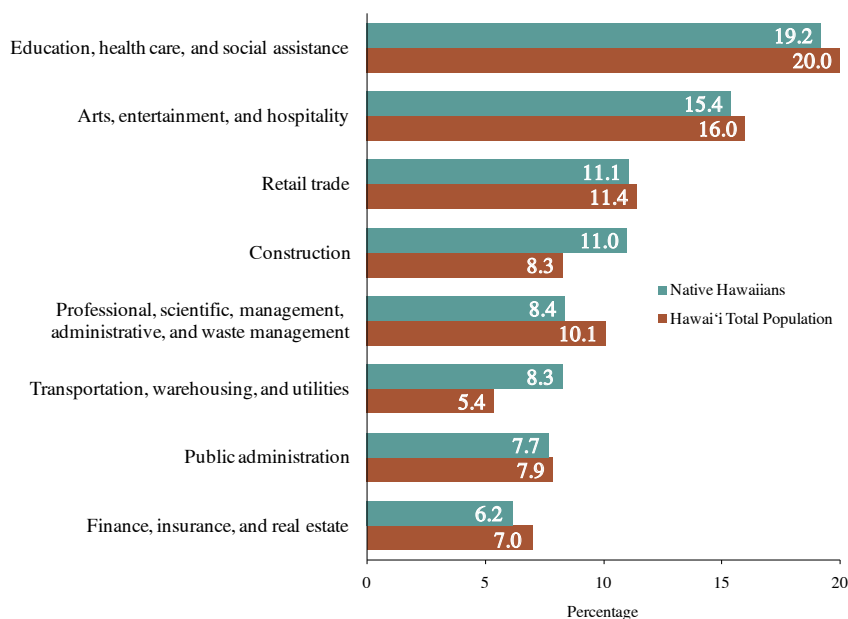


- Compared to the statewide average (33.5 percent), Native Hawaiians are significantly underrepresented in management and professional occupations (24.5 percent).
- Of all Native Hawaiians in the workforce, 24.7 percent are employed in positions involving manual labor compared to 18.7 percent of the statewide population.

When compared to non-Hawaiians, Native Hawaiians experience a nine percentage-point disadvantage in management and professional positions, and are more likely to be employed in positions involving manual labor.

Occupations (jobs) are distinguishable from industries (areas of the economy) in that occupations represent the kind of work performed by someone, while industries refer to the type of activities at one’s place of work. Understanding employment distribution and trends related to occupation and industry provides a snapshot of those areas where opportunities may exist for Native Hawaiians.

Figure 3. Industry Distribution, State of Hawai'i (2007–09 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates)



- In Hawai'i, the percentage of civilian employed Native Hawaiians (16 years and older) working in the construction, transportation, warehousing, and utilities industries (19.3 percent) is substantially higher than the statewide average (13.7 percent).
- Native Hawaiians are clearly underrepresented in the professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management group of industries (1.7 percentage point difference).

KS Impact

Table 1. Kamehameha Schools Scholarships (2009–10 KS Annual Report)

	Number of Awards	Total of Awards
Nā Ho'okama A Pauahi	2,046	\$12,600,000
'Imi Na'auao	175	\$2,600,000
Ke Ali'i Pauahi Foundation	242	\$309,000
Hana Lima	287	\$500,000
Kaulele	27	\$230,000
TOTAL	2,777	\$16,239,000

- KS awarded over \$16 million dollars in scholarship funds to over 2,700 Native Hawaiian college and graduate school students in 2009–10.
- Based on Census Bureau estimates (2007–09 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates) of the Native Hawaiian college-going population, KS funded approximately 8 percent of all Native Hawaiians students in post-secondary institutions.

KS funded approximately 8 percent of all Native Hawaiians attending college and universities in Hawai'i and the United States.

Economic Indicators

Economic indicators include statistics that point to present and future economic conditions. Listed below are several common economic indicators often used to describe the characteristics of a population. Table 1 indicates that Native Hawaiians experience higher rates of poverty and a lower average income than non-Hawaiians.

Table 2. Select Economic Statistics, State of Hawai'i (2007–09 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates)

	Hawai'i Total	Native Hawaiians
Median household income	\$65,305	\$62,797
Unemployment rate	3.3%	5.7%
Home ownership	57.9%	53.6%
Families living in poverty	6.4%	9.8%
Individuals living in poverty	9.3%	11.4%

- Native Hawaiian families in Hawai'i live in poverty at a rate that is 53 percent higher than the average of all families in Hawai'i.
- Native Hawaiians living in Hawai'i are 23 percent more likely to be living in poverty than all individuals across the state.

Conclusion

The importance of higher education for Native Hawaiians is ever-increasing, particularly in today's global market. Higher education and increased benefits are shown to be linked. For example, research indicates that college graduates are more likely than high school graduates to enter into occupations and industries that yield higher returns, thus increasing their likelihood of earning a livable wage. The positive impact on future earnings of two-year degrees and certificates expands the definition of post-high school academic achievement beyond a four-year degree. KS is dedicated to providing opportunities that increase these tangible benefits by mitigating uneven rates of participation in college and beyond.

Equally important is this observation: "While the benefits of providing postsecondary education and training are powerful and growing, so are the barriers to access..." (Carnevale et al. 2009). Historically, Native Hawaiians have experienced less access to higher education than non-Hawaiians. Additionally, Hawaiian students are more likely to drop out of college within the first two years. According to a tracking study by the University of Hawai'i Institutional Research Office, over a quarter of Hawaiian students drop out of UH Mānoa after their first year (26.7 percent) and

another 9.5 percent after their second year, leaving only 63.8 percent retained after the first two years compared to 70.3 percent for UH Mānoa overall (Balutski, Freitas, and Wright 2011). In addition to scholarships and other support for Native Hawaiians to successfully attain college and graduate degrees, attention to breaking down barriers to access continue to be developed by KS and other organizations serving Native Hawaiians.

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Notes

- 1 See The Kamehameha Schools Education Strategic Plan at www.ksbe.edu.
- 2 This brief is part of an annual update series published by Kamehameha Schools' Research & Evaluation division. The 2010 Post-high Update (Keahiolalo-Karasuda and Speck 2010) is available online at: http://www.ksbe.edu/spi/PDFS/Update%20Series/Post%20High%20Report_2010.pdf