

Study: Va. jobs will require more education

By Michael Felberbaum, AP Business Writer | June 24, 2010

RICHMOND, Va. --Most of Virginia's jobs will require more than a high school education by 2018, higher than the national average, according to a national report issued by Georgetown University.

Researchers at Georgetown's Center on Education and the Workforce predict that 64 percent of jobs in Virginia will require more than high school education, ranking it 14th. Nationally, that average is expected to be 63 percent.

According to the study, jobs requiring postsecondary education are expected to total 389,000 in Virginia, while jobs for high school graduates and dropouts are predicted to add up to 150,000.

Employers nationally are expected to need 22 million new workers with at least some education beyond high school by 2018, but the report says the country is likely to fall short by 3 million.

That's because not enough Americans are completing postsecondary education in a timely fashion or at all, said study co-author Nicole Smith.

"We are not graduating Americans at the rate that we ought to. We're falling behind," Smith said.

The report also predicts that Virginia will add more than 1.3 million jobs by 2018 from new openings and others created by the retirement of older workers.

Still, the fastest growing industries and occupations are those that have the highest concentration of postsecondary education and training, Smith said.

In Virginia, health care as well as computers and communications are expected to be key areas for growth, said David R. Tysinger, an economist with the Virginia Employment Commission, who speaks to high school and college students across the state about the job market.

"Education does not stop at that high school door," Tysinger said. "A minimum of two years of education, either some type of specialty, technical certificate or license is needed to secure these good paying jobs." ■