

Elite degrees don't necessarily earn more, study finds

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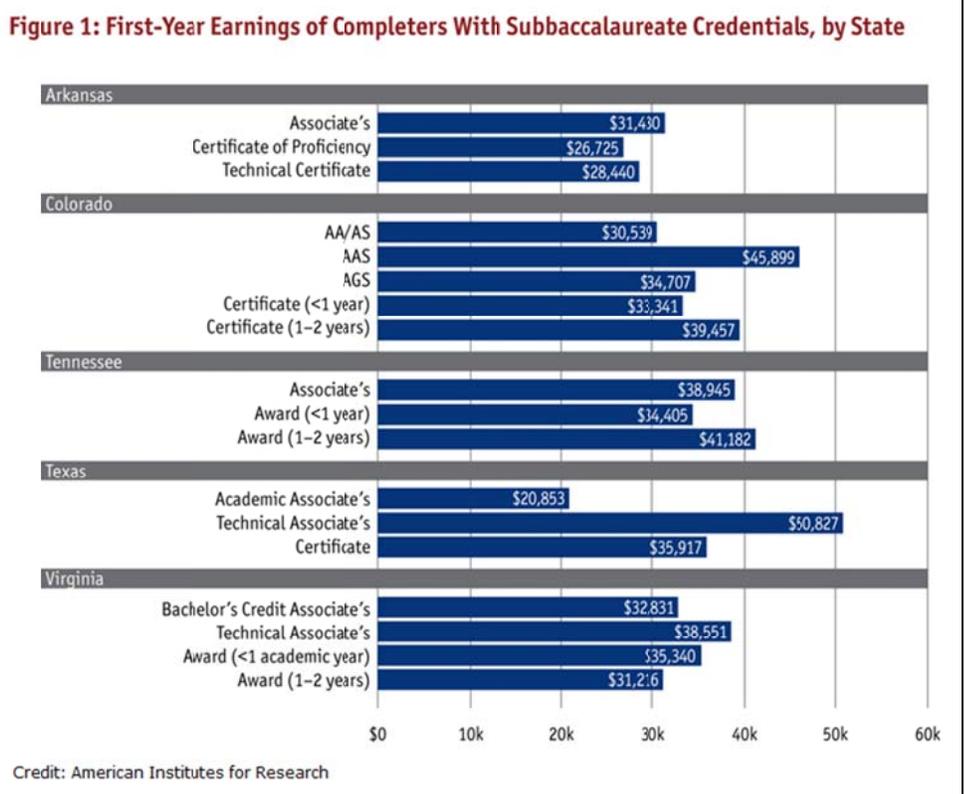
Graduates of elite colleges and universities don't necessarily make more money than their counterparts at less well-known schools, according to new research.

Using the first-year earnings of graduates of colleges and universities in five states, the study found that those from regional and second-tier campuses, on average, earn about the same as those who go to prestigious flagship universities.

It also confirms that students with associate's degrees often out-earn bachelor's degree-holders, and that some new graduates in science fields including biology or chemistry don't make much more than English language or literature majors.

"The findings challenge some conventional wisdom, showing, for example, that what you study matters more than where you study," said Mark Schneider of the American Institutes for Research, which issued the report.

The study looked at first-year earnings of graduates in Arkansas, Colorado, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia, which have put that information online.



Backing up earlier findings, it said new graduates with associate's degrees and credentials earned as much as \$11,000 a year more than students with bachelor's degrees.

Engineering majors are paid the most. People with nursing and business degrees also take home have high salaries. Graduates in music, philosophy, and the other liberal arts almost always earn the least.