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COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND WORK ACTIVITY OF 2005 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

In October 2005, 68.6 percent of high school graduates from the class of 2005 were enrolled in colleges or universities, according to data released today by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. The college enrollment rate for recent high school graduates was a historical high for the series dating back to 1959.

Information on school enrollment and work activity is collected monthly in the Current Population Survey (CPS). Each October, a supplement to the basic CPS gathers more detailed information on full-time and part-time enrollment status, level of education, and enrollment status a year earlier. The CPS is a monthly nationwide survey of about 60,000 households that obtains information on employment, unemployment, earnings, demographics, and other characteristics of the civilian noninstitutional population age 16 and over. Additional information about the October supplement is included in the Technical Note.

Recent High School Graduates and Dropouts

Of the 2.7 million youth who graduated from high school between October 2004 and October 2005, 1.8 million (68.6 percent) were attending college in October 2005. The college enrollment rate of young women, 70.4 percent, continued to exceed that of young men, 66.5 percent. Asians were more likely than whites, blacks, and Hispanics to be enrolled in college in the fall following their high school graduation.

Among recent high school graduates enrolled in college, 91.2 percent were full-time students. Of these full-time students, 44.3 percent were in the labor force, either working or looking for work, in October 2005. In contrast, 79.0 percent of part-time college students participated in the labor force.

About two-thirds of the 2005 high school graduates enrolled in college attended 4-year institutions. The labor force participation rate for these students was 39.9 percent, and their unemployment rate was 6.3 percent. In contrast, 61.3 percent of the recent high school graduates enrolled in 2-year institutions were in the labor force, and their unemployment rate was 11.0 percent. (See table 1.)

Recent high school graduates who were not enrolled in college in the fall of 2005 were more likely than enrolled graduates to participate in the labor force (78.5 versus 47.4 percent). The unemployment rate for those not enrolled in college was 20.6 percent in October 2005; the jobless rate for recent high school graduates enrolled in college was 8.4 percent.

Between October 2004 and October 2005, about 400,000 young people dropped out of high school. The labor force participation rate for these dropouts (57.2 percent) was considerably lower than the participation rate for recent high school graduates who had not enrolled in college (78.5 percent). Among recent

high school dropouts, men were more likely than women to be participating in the labor force in October 2005 (59.7 and 54.0 percent, respectively). The unemployment rate for recent high school dropouts was 32.9 percent in October 2005, and the unemployment rate of recent high school graduates who had not enrolled in college was 20.6 percent.

Youth Enrolled in School

In October 2005, 20.9 million 16- to 24-year olds were either enrolled in high school (9.9 million) or college (11.0 million). Among high school students, 31.0 percent were engaged in some form of labor force activity in October. Among college students who were enrolled full time, 52.7 percent participated in the labor force. In contrast, 88.2 percent of part-time college students participated in the labor force. (See table 2.)

Overall, the unemployment rate for high school students (17.0 percent) was higher than for college students (6.1 percent). Unemployment rates for black (35.0 percent) and Hispanic (24.8 percent) high school students continued to be higher than for whites (14.9 percent). Among college students, blacks had the highest unemployment rate (10.5 percent), while Hispanic and white college students had similar rates (5.9 and 5.7 percent, respectively). Asian college students had an unemployment rate of 4.6 percent in October 2005.

Out-of-School Youth

Of the 15.9 million 16- to 24-year olds not enrolled in school in October 2005, 81.3 percent were in the labor force. Among youth not in school, men were more likely than women to be in the labor force, 87.5 percent compared with 74.6 percent. The difference was greatest among those with less than a high school diploma and diminished with more education. (See table 2.)

Unemployment rates for youth not in school were lower among those with higher education levels. The unemployment rates for youths who had college degrees were 5.4 percent for men and 3.6 percent for women. In contrast, youth without a high school diploma who were not enrolled in school had unemployment rates of 15.3 percent for men and 21.2 percent for women.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from a supplement to the October 2005 Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly survey of about 60,000 households which provides information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment for the nation. The survey is conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau. Data relate to the school enrollment status of persons 16 to 24 years of age in the civilian noninstitutional population in the calendar week that includes the 12th of the month. Data reflect revised population controls for the Current Population Survey introduced in January 2005.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

Reliability of the estimates

Statistics based on the CPS are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. When a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimates may differ from the "true" population values they represent. The exact difference, or *sampling error*, varies depending on the particular sample selected, and this variability is measured by the standard error of the estimate. There is about a 90-percent chance, or level of confidence, that an estimate based on a sample will differ by no more than 1.6 standard errors from the "true" population value because of sampling error. BLS analyses are generally conducted at the 90-percent level of confidence.

The CPS data also are affected by *nonsampling error*. Nonsampling error can occur for many reasons, including the failure to sample a segment of the population, inability to obtain information for all respondents in the sample, inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information, and errors made in the collection or processing of the data.

For a full discussion of the reliability of data from the CPS and information on estimating standard errors, see the "Explanatory Notes and Estimates of Error" section of *Employment and Earnings*.

Concepts

The principal concepts used in connection with the school enrollment series are described briefly below.

School enrollment. Respondents were asked whether they were currently enrolled in a regular school, including day or night school in any type of public, parochial, or other private school. Regular schooling is that which may advance a person toward a high school diploma or a college, university, or professional degree. Such schools include elementary schools, junior or senior high schools, and colleges and universities. Other schooling, including trade schools; on-the-job training; and courses that do not require physical presence in school, such as correspondence courses or other courses of independent study, is included only if the credits granted count towards promotion in regular school.

Full-time and part-time enrollment in college. College students are classified as attending full time if they were taking 12 hours of classes or more (or 9 hours of graduate classes) during an average school week and as part time if they were taking fewer hours.

High school graduation status. Persons who were not enrolled in school at the time of the survey were asked whether they had graduated from high school. Those who had graduated were asked when they completed their high school education. Persons who had not graduated, that is, school dropouts, were asked when they last attended a regular school. Those who were enrolled in college at the time of the survey also were asked when they graduated from high school.

Table 1. Labor force status of 2005 high school graduates and 2004-05 high school dropouts 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, October 2005

(Numbers in thousands)

| Characteristic | Civilian noninsti- tutional population | Civilian labor force | | | | | | |
|--|---|----------------------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|--------|------------------|--------------|
| | | Total | Percent of population | Employed | | Unem | ployed | Not in labor |
| | | | | Total | Percent of population | Number | Rate | force |
| Total, 2005 high school graduates ¹ | 2,675 | 1,529 | 57.2 | 1,320 | 49.3 | 209 | 13.7 | 1,146 |
| Men | 1,262 | 751 | 59.5 | 652 | 51.7 | 99 | 13.1 | 511 |
| Women | 1,414 | 778 | 55.0 | 668 | 47.2 | 110 | 14.2 | 635 |
| White | 2,147 | 1,256 | 58.5 | 1,106 | 51.5 | 149 | 11.9 | 891 |
| | 354 | 196 | 55.3 | 146 | 41.1 | 50 | 25.5 | 159 |
| | 80 | 22 | 27.1 | 22 | 27.1 | - | (²) | 58 |
| | 390 | 237 | 60.6 | 193 | 49.4 | 44 | 18.5 | 154 |
| Enrolled in college | 1,834 | 869 | 47.4 | 795 | 43.4 | 73 | 8.4 | 965 |
| Enrolled in 2-year college | 642 | 393 | 61.3 | 350 | 54.5 | 43 | 11.0 | 249 |
| Enrolled in 4-year college | 1,192 | 475 | 39.9 | 445 | 37.4 | 30 | 6.3 | 717 |
| Full-time students | 1,672 | 741 | 44.3 | 676 | 40.4 | 65 | 8.7 | 931 |
| | 162 | 128 | 79.0 | 120 | 73.8 | 8 | 6.6 | 34 |
| Men | 839 | 406 | 48.4 | 364 | 43.4 | 42 | 10.3 | 433 |
| Women | 995 | 463 | 46.5 | 431 | 43.3 | 31 | 6.8 | 533 |
| White | 1,490 | 728 | 48.8 | 674 | 45.2 | 54 | 7.4 | 762 |
| | 201 | 82 | 40.7 | 68 | 33.9 | 14 | 16.8 | 119 |
| | 70 | 19 | (²) | 19 | (²) | - | (²) | 50 |
| | 211 | 96 | 45.7 | 91 | 43.1 | 6 | 5.8 | 114 |
| Not enrolled in college | 841 | 660 | 78.5 | 525 | 62.4 | 136 | 20.6 | 181 |
| Men | 423 | 345 | 81.6 | 288 | 68.2 | 57 | 16.4 | 78 |
| Women | 418 | 315 | 75.4 | 236 | 56.5 | 79 | 25.1 | 103 |
| White Black or African American Asian Hispanic or Latino ethnicity | 656 | 528 | 80.4 | 432 | 65.9 | 96 | 18.1 | 128 |
| | 153 | 114 | 74.4 | 78 | 50.7 | 36 | 31.9 | 39 |
| | 10 | 2 | (²) | 2 | (²) | - | (²) | 8 |
| | 179 | 140 | 78.2 | 102 | 56.9 | 38 | 27.3 | 39 |
| Total, 2004-05 high school dropouts ³ | 407 | 233 | 57.2 | 156 | 38.3 | 77 | 32.9 | 174 |
| Men | 227 | 136 | 59.7 | 87 | 38.3 | 49 | 35.9 | 91 |
| Women | 180 | 97 | 54.0 | 69 | 38.4 | 28 | 28.8 | 83 |
| White Black or African American Asian Hispanic or Latino ethnicity | 273 | 166 | 61.1 | 114 | 41.9 | 52 | 31.4 | 106 |
| | 114 | 52 | 45.4 | 31 | 27.6 | 20 | (²) | 62 |
| | 7 | 6 | (²) | 6 | (²) | 1 | (²) | - |
| | 86 | 55 | 64.3 | 39 | 45.1 | 17 | (²) | 31 |

¹ Data refer to persons who graduated from high school between October

NOTE: Detail for the above race groups (white, black or African American,

and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Because of rounding, sums of individual items may not equal totals. Dash represents or rounds to zero. Data reflect revised population controls for the Current Population Survey introduced in January 2005.

²⁰⁰⁴ and October 2005.

Data not shown where base is less than 75,000.

Data refer to persons who dropped out of school between October 2004 and October 2005.

Table 2. Labor force status of persons 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, October 2005

(Numbers in thousands)

| | 0: ::: | Civilian labor force | | | | | | |
|---|---|----------------------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|--------|------------------|--------------|
| Characteristic | Civilian noninsti- tutional population | Total | Percent of population | Employed | | Unem | ployed | Not in labor |
| | | | | Total | Percent of population | Number | Rate | force |
| Total, 16 to 24 years | 36,761 | 22,338 | 60.8 | 20,032 | 54.5 | 2,306 | 10.3 | 14,423 |
| Enrolled in school | 20,905 | 9,442 | 45.2 | 8,528 | 40.8 | 914 | 9.7 | 11,462 |
| Enrolled in high school ¹ | 9,905 | 3,075 | 31.0 | 2,552 | 25.8 | 523 | 17.0 | 6,830 |
| Men | 5,234 | 1,528 | 29.2 | 1,292 | 24.7 | 236 | 15.4 | 3,706 |
| Women | 4,671 | 1,547 | 33.1 | 1,260 | 27.0 | 287 | 18.6 | 3,123 |
| WhiteBlack or African AmericanAsianHispanic or Latino ethnicity | 7,597 | 2,587 | 34.1 | 2,200 | 29.0 | 387 | 14.9 | 5,010 |
| | 1,565 | 292 | 18.7 | 190 | 12.1 | 102 | 35.0 | 1,273 |
| | 343 | 74 | 21.5 | 70 | 20.4 | 4 | (²) | 269 |
| | 1,661 | 391 | 23.5 | 294 | 17.7 | 97 | 24.8 | 1,270 |
| Enrolled in college | 11,000 | 6,367 | 57.9 | 5,976 | 54.3 | 391 | 6.1 | 4,633 |
| Enrolled in 2-year college | 2,749 | 1,845 | 67.1 | 1,693 | 61.6 | 152 | 8.2 | 904 |
| Enrolled in 4-year college | 8,250 | 4,522 | 54.8 | 4,282 | 51.9 | 240 | 5.3 | 3,728 |
| Full-time students | 9,396 | 4,952 | 52.7 | 4,612 | 49.1 | 340 | 6.9 | 4,443 |
| | 1,604 | 1,414 | 88.2 | 1,363 | 85.0 | 51 | 3.6 | 189 |
| Men | 5,034 | 2,816 | 55.9 | 2,620 | 52.0 | 196 | 7.0 | 2,218 |
| Women | 5,965 | 3,551 | 59.5 | 3,356 | 56.3 | 195 | 5.5 | 2,414 |
| WhiteBlack or African AmericanAsianHispanic or Latino ethnicity | 8,603 | 5,169 | 60.1 | 4,877 | 56.7 | 292 | 5.7 | 3,433 |
| | 1,328 | 656 | 49.4 | 587 | 44.2 | 69 | 10.5 | 672 |
| | 715 | 326 | 45.6 | 311 | 43.5 | 15 | 4.6 | 389 |
| | 1,243 | 681 | 54.8 | 641 | 51.6 | 40 | 5.9 | 561 |
| Not enrolled in school 16 to 19 years 20 to 24 years | 15,856 | 12,896 | 81.3 | 11,504 | 72.6 | 1,392 | 10.8 | 2,960 |
| | 2,884 | 2,070 | 71.8 | 1,681 | 58.3 | 389 | 18.8 | 813 |
| | 12,973 | 10,826 | 83.5 | 9,823 | 75.7 | 1,003 | 9.3 | 2,147 |
| Men Less than a high school diploma High school graduates, no college ³ Some college or associate degree Bachelor's degree and higher | 8,279 | 7,240 | 87.5 | 6,442 | 77.8 | 798 | 11.0 | 1,039 |
| | 2,009 | 1,602 | 79.8 | 1,357 | 67.5 | 246 | 15.3 | 406 |
| | 3,849 | 3,381 | 87.8 | 3,018 | 78.4 | 363 | 10.7 | 468 |
| | 1,713 | 1,576 | 92.0 | 1,424 | 83.1 | 153 | 9.7 | 137 |
| | 708 | 681 | 96.1 | 644 | 90.9 | 37 | 5.4 | 27 |
| Women Less than a high school diploma High school graduates, no college ³ Some college or associate degree Bachelor's degree and higher | 7,578 | 5,656 | 74.6 | 5,062 | 66.8 | 594 | 10.5 | 1,921 |
| | 1,449 | 776 | 53.5 | 611 | 42.2 | 165 | 21.2 | 673 |
| | 3,219 | 2,355 | 73.2 | 2,083 | 64.7 | 271 | 11.5 | 864 |
| | 1,861 | 1,553 | 83.4 | 1,430 | 76.8 | 123 | 7.9 | 308 |
| | 1,049 | 973 | 92.8 | 938 | 89.4 | 35 | 3.6 | 76 |
| White | 12,412 | 10,285 | 82.9 | 9,323 | 75.1 | 962 | 9.4 | 2,127 |
| | 2,448 | 1,843 | 75.3 | 1,506 | 61.5 | 338 | 18.3 | 605 |
| | 419 | 339 | 81.0 | 314 | 74.9 | 25 | 7.5 | 80 |
| | 3,460 | 2,663 | 77.0 | 2,367 | 68.4 | 295 | 11.1 | 798 |

 $^{^{\}mbox{\scriptsize 1}}$ Includes a small number of persons enrolled in grades below high

school.

2 Data not shown where base is less than 75,000.

3 Includes high school diploma or equivalent.

NOTE: Detail for the above race groups (white, black or African American,

In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Because of rounding, sums of individual items may not equal totals. Data reflect revised population controls for the Current Population Survey introduced in January 2005.