

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY AGE GROUP

If we look at the population of the Cape & Islands by both age and education, we get an understanding of the workers who will be replacing the baby boomers. As the baby boomers have aged, 45–54-year-olds and 55–64-year-olds have become the largest age cohort in all six educational attainment groups. As the boomers continue to near retirement age and, over time, leave the labor force, nearly every educational category faces a potential shortfall of workers. For example, in 2008–2010, there were more than 4,600 people with an Associate’s Degree between the ages of 45 and 54 in the Cape & Islands but only 1,200 between the ages of 25 and 34 with such a degree. The difference of more than 3,400 individuals is equivalent to 74.5 percent of the 45–54-year-olds who may need to be replaced as they leave the workforce. Similarly large potential shortfalls of working-age individuals exist for people with Some College education (4,078, or 48.1 percent) and a Bachelor’s Degree (4,747, or 50.5 percent). However, these gaps may actually be smaller since the educational requirements for most industries and occupations have been increasing, and some positions traditionally filled by people with a High School or Associate’s Degree are now held by those with a Bachelor’s Degree or higher.

Source: US Census Bureau 2008–2010 American Community Survey PUMS data files.

