

## CROSSING THE FINISH LINE: TRENDS IN DEGREE COMPLETIONS OVER THE PAST DECADE (2000–2010)

Total annual completions show the number of people who have earned a degree or Certificate in a given year. From 2000 to 2010, the number of people earning Certificates, Associate's Degrees, and Bachelor's Degrees increased in the Cape & Islands, Massachusetts, and the United States. In the region, the strongest annual growth (19.2 percent) over the course of the decade came from the number of students earning Certificates at public institutions, far exceeding state (4.8 percent) and national (4.4 percent) growth. Public institutions in the Cape & Islands also outpaced the state and nation in the growth of both Associate's and Bachelor's degree completions over the course of the decade; the region's annual growth in these categories was 4.4 percent and 3.1 percent,

respectively. In fact, the strong growth in completions at public institutions in the region resulted in the strongest growth in total completions in each of the three post-secondary degrees (Certificates, Associate's Degrees, and Bachelor's Degrees) among all the regional labor markets.

**Source:** National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Post Secondary Education Data System.

**Note:** Degree completions are for those students who completed degrees at institutions within the defined geography. The students may not actually live in the region. Completion totals are based on degrees completed in an academic year. For example, 2010 completions represent degrees completed in the 2009–2010 academic year.

		Certificates			Associate's Degrees			Bachelor's Degrees		
		Cape & Islands	MA	US	Cape & Islands	MA	US	Cape & Islands	MA	US
Public	Completions 2000	27	2,273	298,282	281	7,487	471,339	136	12,718	811,076
	Completions 2010	157	3,618	460,865	432	9,831	670,395	185	16,251	1,049,058
	Absolute Change	130	1,345	162,583	151	2,344	199,056	49	3,533	237,982
	Annual Growth Rate (Percent)	19.2	4.8	4.4	4.4	2.8	3.6	3.1	2.5	2.6
Private	Completions 2000	36	5,221	258,503	0	3,812	135,604	0	29,658	431,412
	Completions 2010	102	8,195	430,685	0	4,366	249,258	8	35,972	603,141
	Absolute Change	66	2,974	172,182	0	554	113,654	8	6,314	171,729
	Annual Growth Rate (Percent)	11.0	4.6	5.2	NA	1.4	6.3	NA	1.9	3.4
Total	Completions 2000	63	7,494	556,785	281	11,299	606,943	136	42,376	1,242,488
	Completions 2010	259	11,813	891,550	432	14,197	919,653	193	52,223	1,652,199
	Absolute Change	196	4,319	334,765	151	2,898	312,710	57	9,847	409,711
	Annual Growth Rate (Percent)	15.2	4.7	4.8	4.4	2.3	4.2	3.6	2.1	2.9