



Circle School Graduates in 2015

College Attendance, Academic Degrees, and Occupations



INTRODUCTION

From families spanning the income spectrum, we find that Circle School graduates excel in traditional ways such as college attendance and academic degrees. We are pleased to present those findings here.

The Circle School proposes that the most important purposes of primary and secondary schooling are about launching children to personal fulfillment and engagement in society. With these aims in mind, The Circle School's program is built on children's immersion in self-direction and community. The social value and natural appeal of traditional academic pursuits tend to emerge and flourish when adults are not forceful or frantic in pressing academic study on children. The great variety of human intelligences also flourishes in children, extending beyond academics and narrow curriculum into many domains of human achievement and possibility.

We would rather measure and be judged by our graduates' self-actualization, life satisfaction, achievement in self-chosen domains, and productive engagement in culture, community, society, and technology. Alas, it's easier to measure college attendance, academic degrees, and income. And alas, if we measure what we'd like to, there are few accepted standards or averages to compare.

The Circle School was founded in 1984, licensed by Pennsylvania's Department of Education for a few dozen students, pre-school through 8th grade. In 1998 the school added high school grades 9 through 12. Enrollment is currently about 70 students.

As of June 2015 the school has graduated 78 students from high school, the oldest of whom are 35 years old. This study reports on those graduates: their college attendance, degrees earned, and occupations.

Data are drawn from an online survey, personal communications with graduates, review of graduates' social media and other online presence, data from a 2008 study of graduates, school records, and (when unable to communicate directly with graduates) communications with graduates' family and friends.

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On the cover: Depiction of Circle School graduates' job categories, occupations, and avocations. Size indicates frequency of occurrence.

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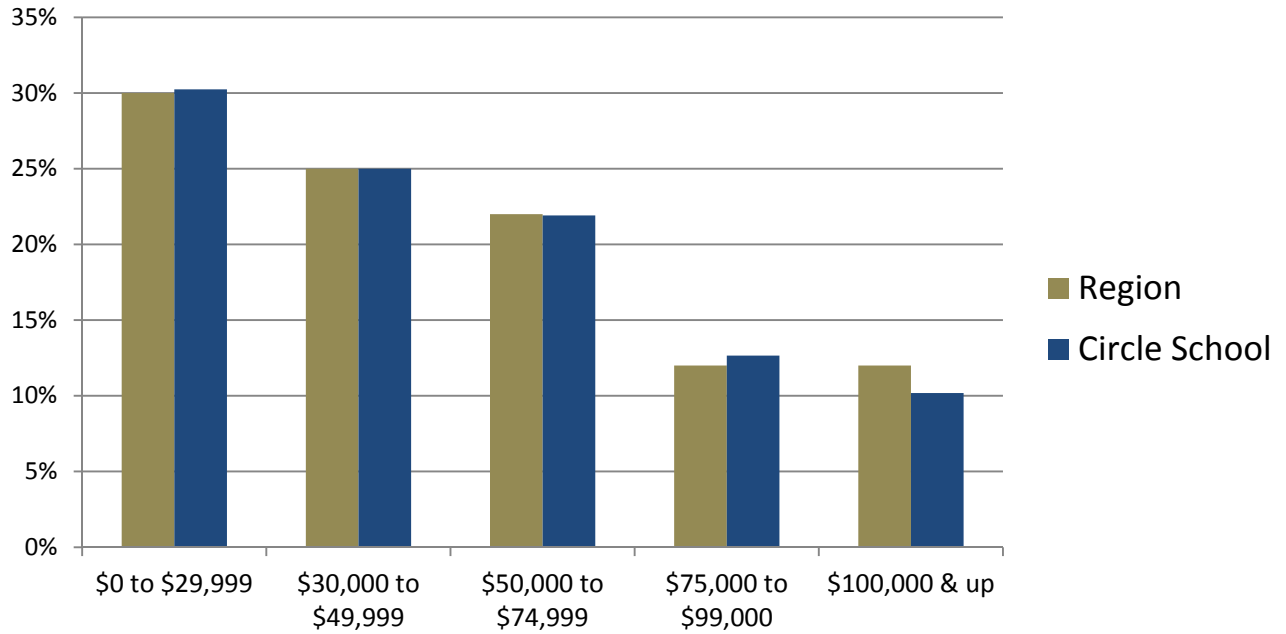
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Appendix A: Circle School Graduates in 78 Blurbs

Economically democratic

Household Income Profile: Region vs The Circle School

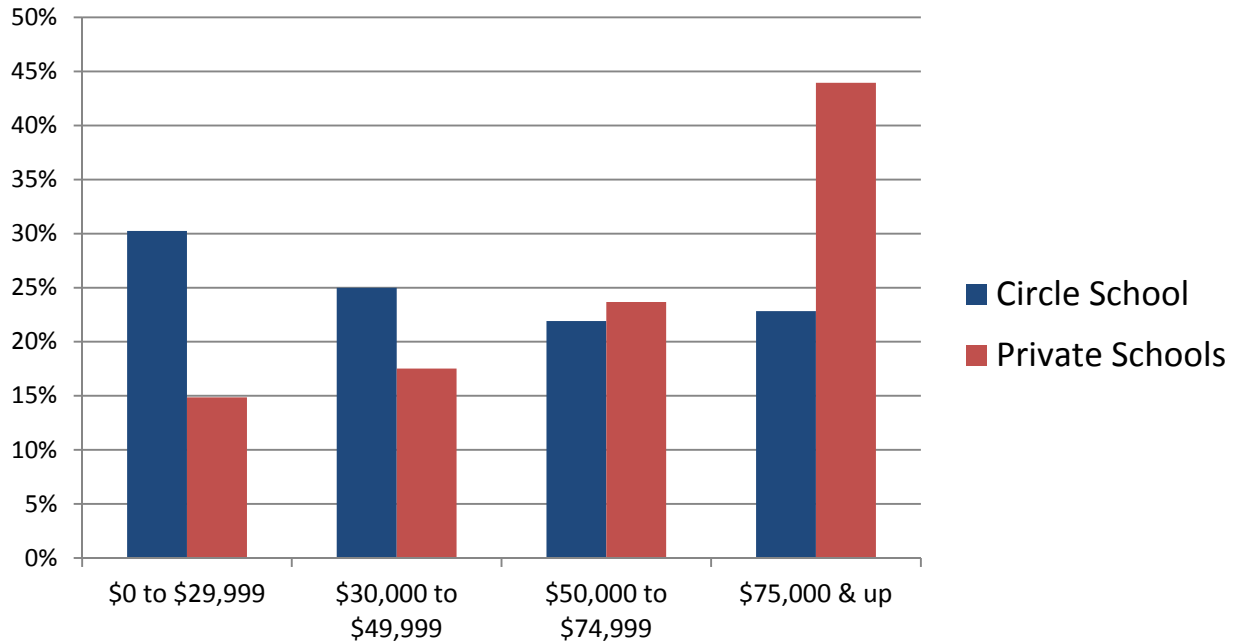


- The income profile of Circle School families matches that of the school’s service area.¹
- The school achieves its aim to be financially available to most families.

¹ School profile drawn from 324 Circle School financial aid applications processed by Flowers & Flowers CPA. Regional profile drawn from US Census Bureau household income data by ZIP/ZCTA code for the area within a 30-minute drive of the school, from *Enrollment Dynamics & Student Demographics*, The Circle School (2008).

Unusual among private schools

Household Income Profile: The Circle School vs U.S. Private Schools



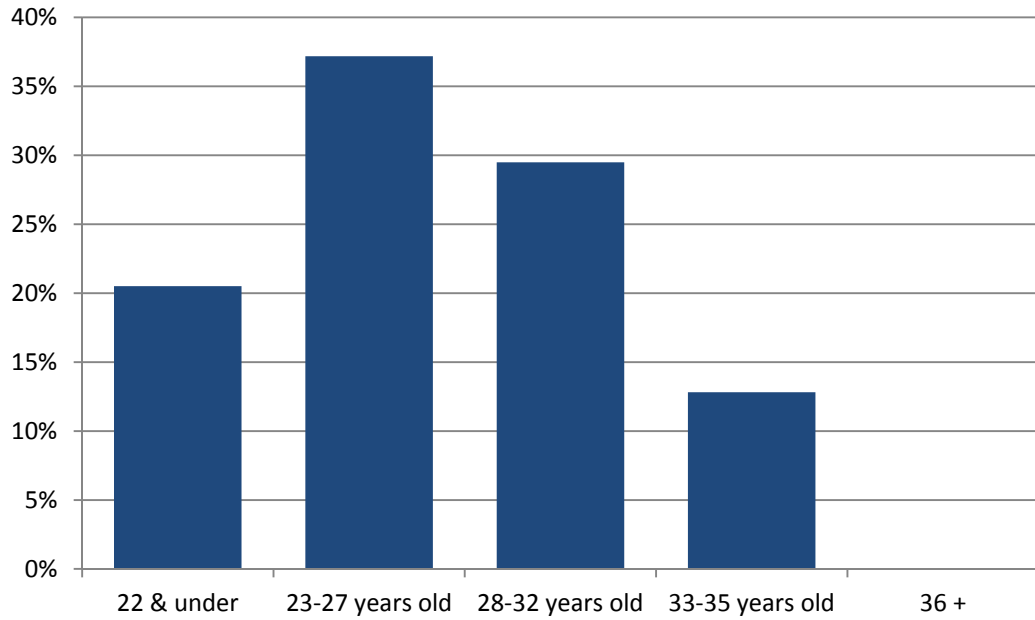
- Private schools generally serve higher-income families.
- Families with income over \$100,000 make up 28% of private school families nationwide,² compared with 10% of Circle School families.³
- The Circle School demonstrates feasibility of affordable democratic education.

² US Census Bureau, *Table 6: School Enrollment for Related Children 3 to 17 Years by Age, Type of School, and Family Income: 2000*. Downloaded July 26, 2015, from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/briefs/phc-t39/tables/tab6S-01.xls>.

³ School profile drawn from 324 Circle School financial aid applications processed by Flowers & Flowers CPA.

Young alumni

Current Age of Circle School Graduates

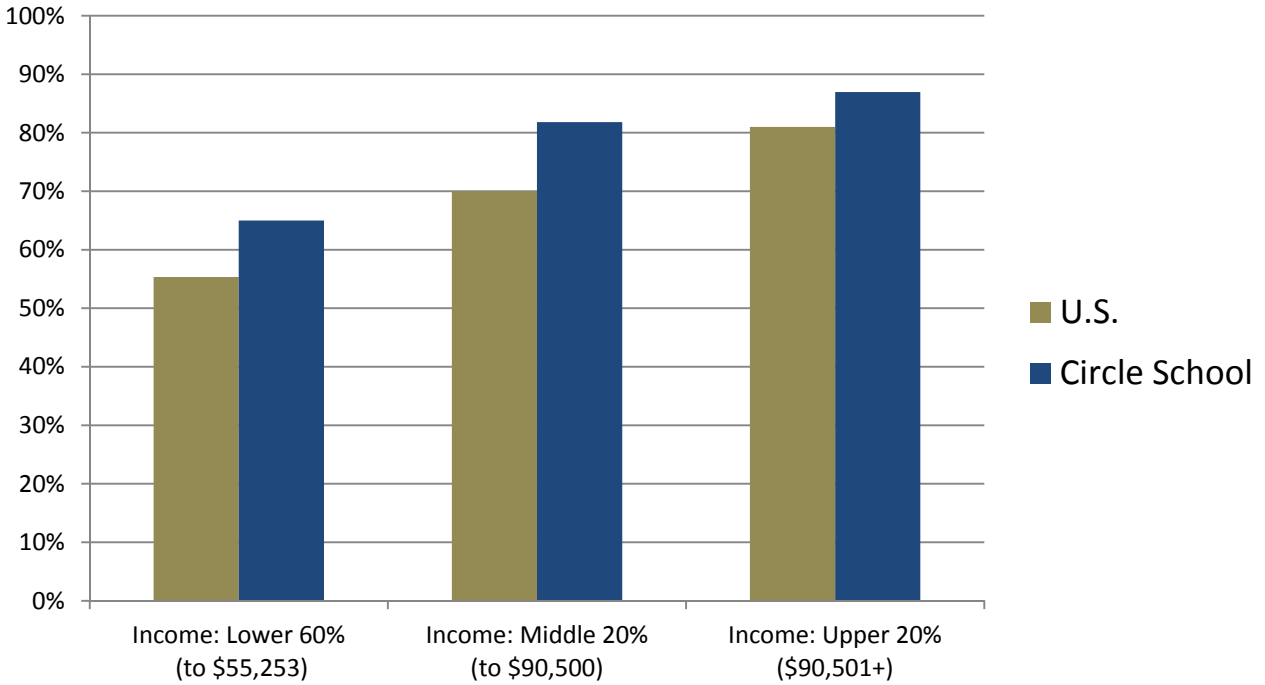


Represents all 78 graduates

- The Circle School's oldest graduates are 35 years old.
- The school was founded in 1984 and added high school grades in 1998.

Beating the averages

College Attendance by Household Income



Represents all 54 graduates for whom income data are available⁴

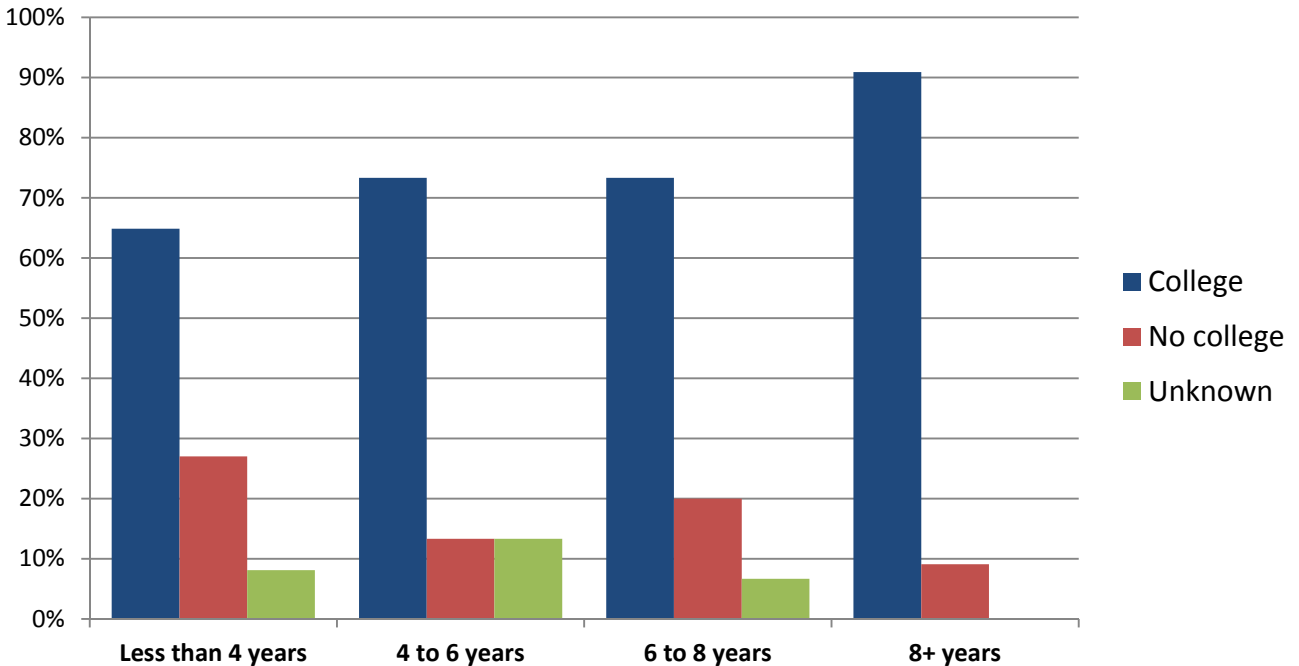
- Circle School graduates attend college at rates greater than national averages.⁵

⁴ Circle School data represent individual family incomes in each graduate's final year at The Circle School.

⁵ U.S. data from *Education Pays 2013: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society* (The College Board, 2013). Downloaded July 23, 2015, from: <http://trends.collegeboard.org/education-pays>.

High college attendance

College Attendance by Years at The Circle School



Represents all 78 graduates

- The longer you stay, the more likely you'll go.
- 91% attended college, among those who attended The Circle School 8+ years.
- 84% attended college after 4 years or more at The Circle School.⁶
- For comparison: 60% of 18- to 34-year-old Americans have attended college⁷, and 59% of Americans 25 years old and up.⁸

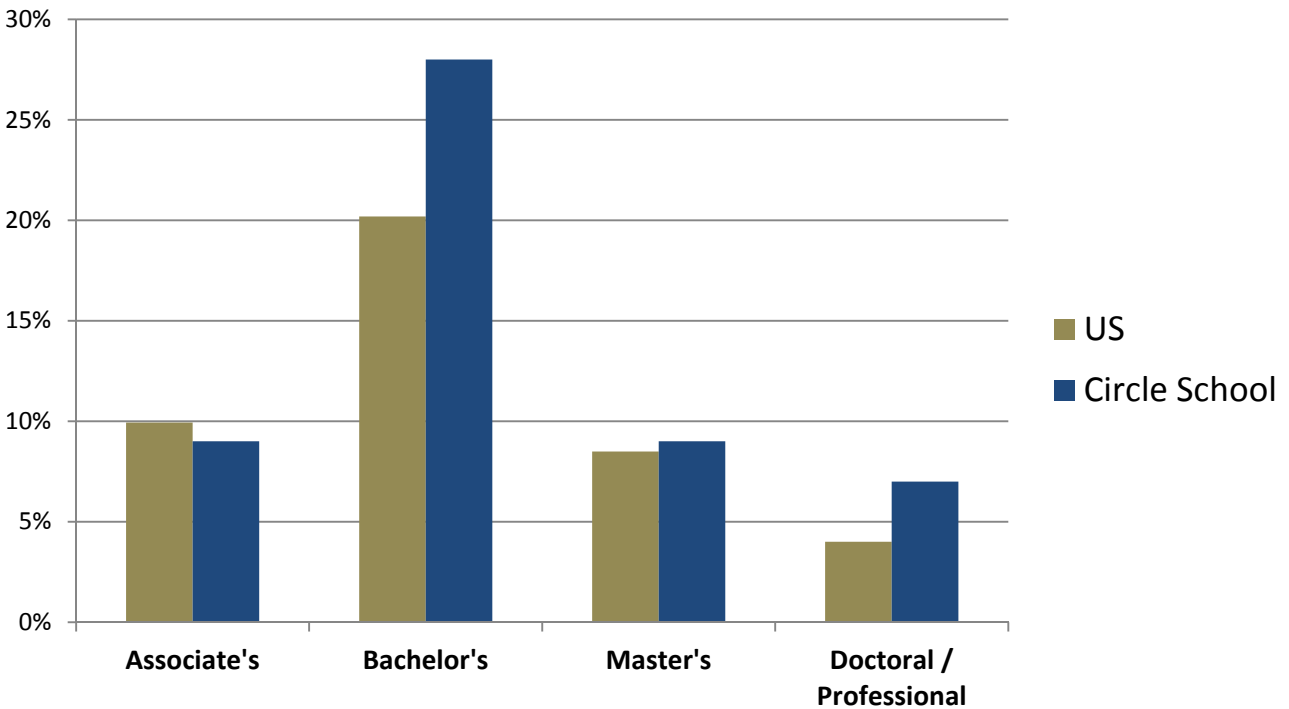
⁶ Ignores unknowns. If you assume all unknowns did not attend college, the figure is 78%.

⁷ US Census Bureau, Community Population Survey 2014, *Table 1, Educational Attainment of the Population 18 Years and Over, by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin*. Downloaded July 23, 2015, from <http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/data/cps/2014/tables.html>.

⁸ US Census Bureau, Community Population Survey 2014, *Table 2, Educational Attainment of the Population 25 Years and Over, by Selected Characteristics*. Same download as above.

College degrees

Highest Educational Attainment, 25 years and over



Represents all graduates 25 years and over. Assumes *none* of the unknowns have degrees.⁹

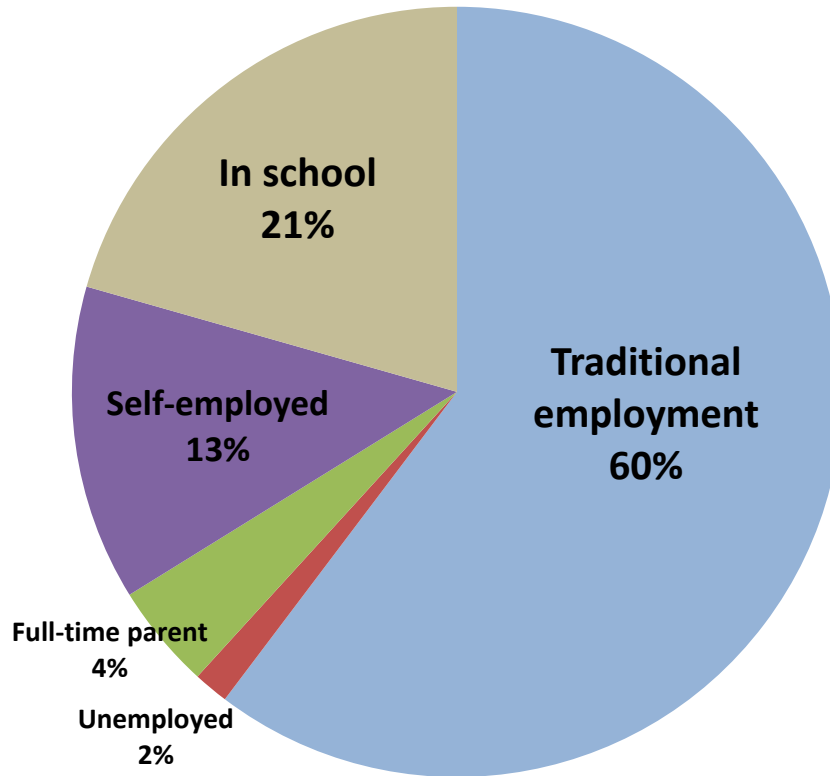
- Circle School graduates 25 years and over hold more Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees than Americans 25 years and over.¹⁰
- Overall, 53 to 62% of Circle School graduates 25 years and over hold at least one degree, compared with 42% of Americans 25 years and over.¹¹
- Chart includes only degrees actually conferred. 21% of Circle School graduates are currently primarily occupied as students pursuing degrees that are NOT counted here, including two more PhD candidates.

⁹ If you ignore the 7 unknowns, Circle School figures are slightly higher in every category: 10% Associate's, 33% Bachelor's, 10% Master's, 8% Doctoral or Professional.

¹⁰ US Census Bureau, Community Population Survey 2014, *Table 1, Educational Attainment of the Population 18 Years and Over, by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin*. Downloaded July 23, 2015, from <http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/data/cps/2014/tables.html>

¹¹ US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey 2014, *Table 2, Educational Attainment of the Population 25 Years and Over, by Selected Characteristics*. Downloaded July 27, 2015 from same URL as above. Circle School figure is 62% if you ignore the unknowns, or 53% if you assume none of the unknowns have any degrees.

Productively engaged
Employment Status

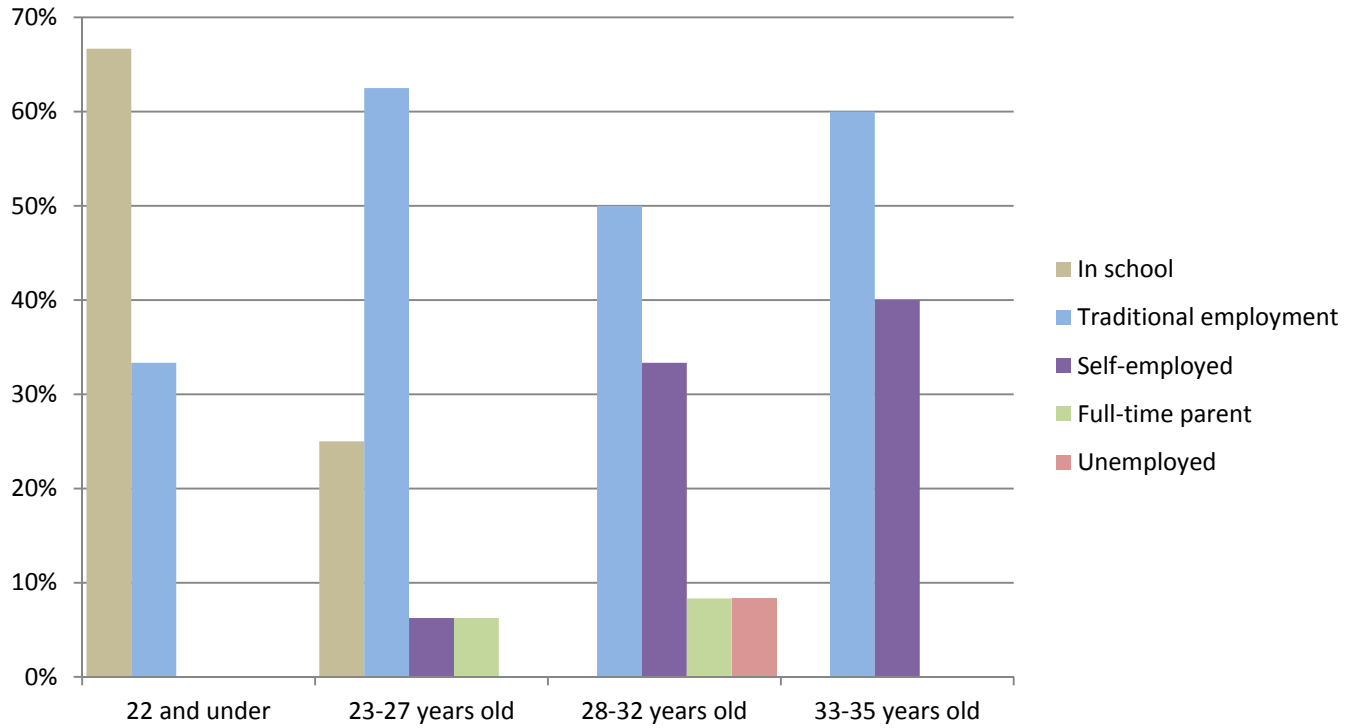


Represents all 68 graduates whose occupation status is known

- 94% of graduates are employed or in school (or both), 4% are full-time parents, and 2% are unemployed or out of the labor pool.
- At 13%, the rate of self-employment is greater than American self-employment (estimated variously from 6.6% to 10.2%).

From school to entrepreneurship

Employment Status by Age, Graduates who attended 4+ years

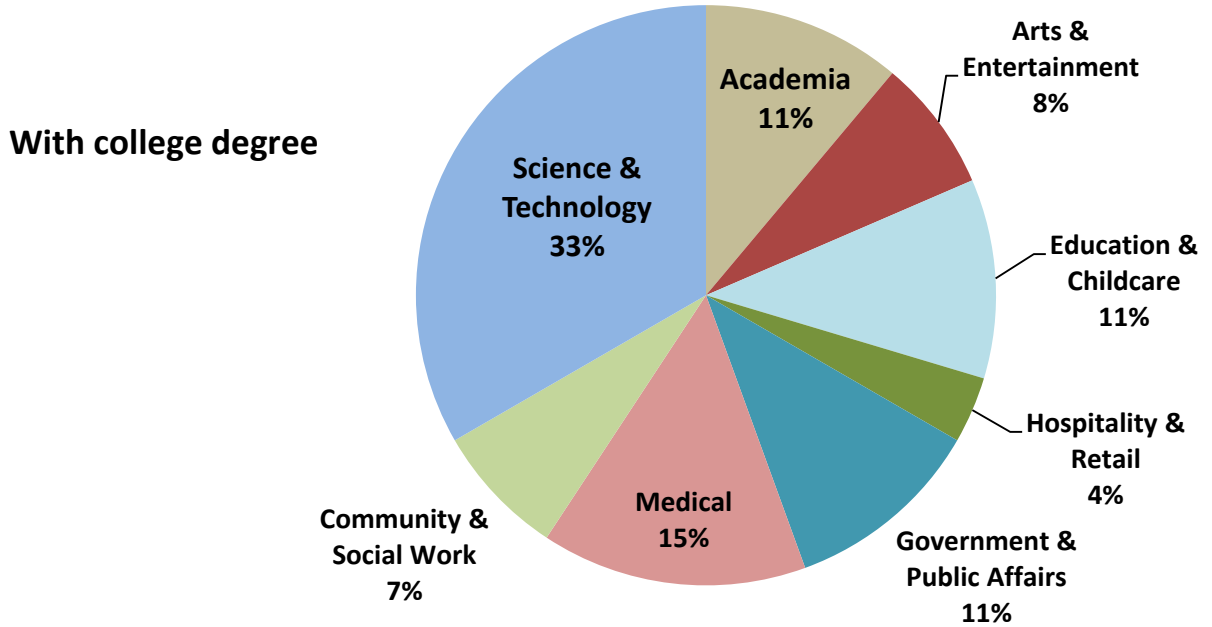


Represents all graduates who attended 4 years or more, excluding 2 unknowns

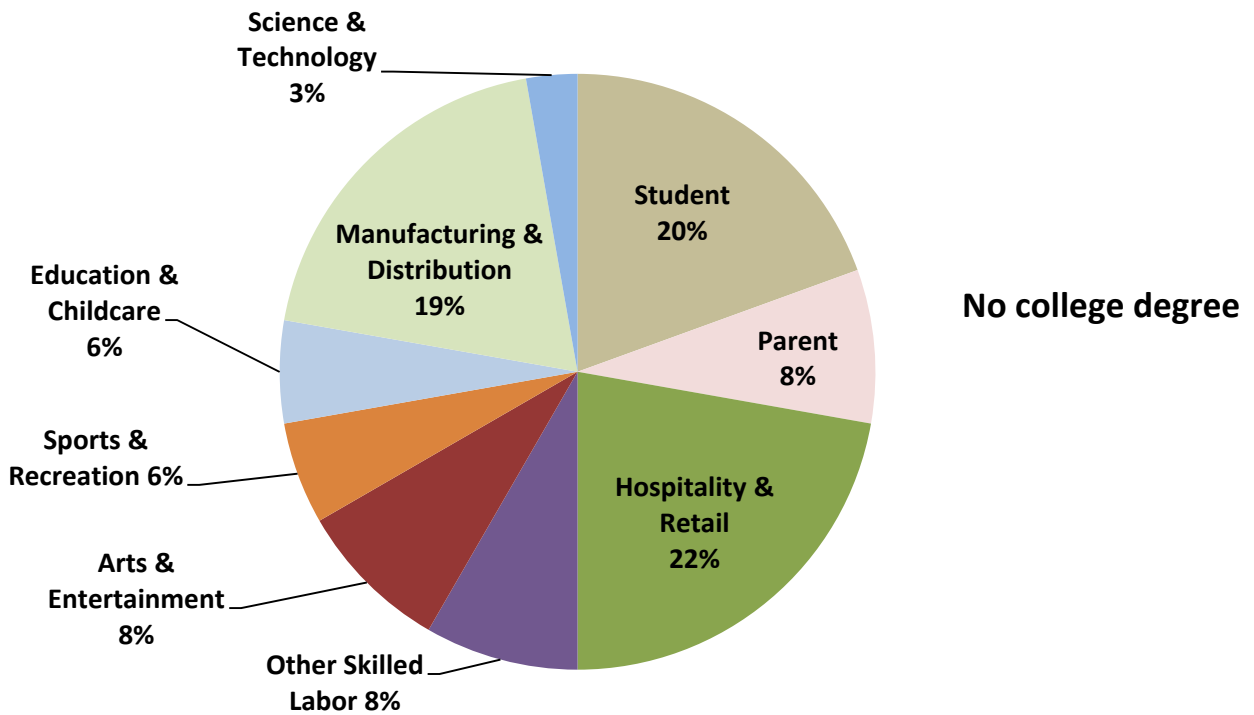
- The number in school decreases with age.
- Self-employment increases with age, and is remarkably high in the two oldest groups.
- High self-employment has always been apparent among Circle School families, around 25% in the most recent school year.

With and without college degree

Job Category



Represents all 27 graduates with college degree, whose occupation is known



Represents all 37 graduates not known to have a college degree, whose occupation is known

Even without a degree

Occupations & Categories, Graduates with No College Degree



Includes all 37 graduates not known to have a college degree, whose occupation is known. Size indicates frequency.

- Individual occupations:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Apprentice Lab Technician | Painter |
| Arcade Operator | Restaurant Hostess |
| Auto Mechanic & Ecodesign Consultant | Retail Clerk |
| Biohacking & Cryptography | Student |
| Bouncer | Student |
| Chef | Student |
| Cook | Student |
| Cook | Student |
| Dishwasher | Student |
| DIY Audio Equipment Kit Assembler | Tabletop Game Designer |
| Full-time Mom | Trucking Company Dispatcher |
| Full-time Mom | Unemployed |
| Full-time Mom | Utility Person (Kitchen) |
| Home Childcare Provider | Video Camera Operator |
| Job Corps Training | Warehouse Manager |
| Martial Arts Studio Owner | Warehouse Packer |
| Model & Dancer | Warehouse Packer |
| Nanny | Warehouse Packer |
| Organic Farm Intern | |

Colleges Attended By Circle School Graduates¹²

Allegheny College	Harcum College	Slippery Rock University
American University	Harrisburg Area Community College	Temple University
Arizona State University	Harvard University Extension School	Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology
Babson College	Indiana University of Pennsylvania	Thomas Edison State College
Bard College	Institute for Social Ecology	Tidewater Community College
Bennington College	International Language Institute	Union Theological Seminary
Brown University	Lebanon Valley College	Universität Heidelberg
Bucknell University	Marlboro College	University of Colorado
Central Pennsylvania College	McDaniel College	University of Maryland University College
Community College of Vermont	Millersville University	University of Pennsylvania
Culinary Institute of America	Montgomery College	University of Pittsburgh
Davis & Elkins College	Old Dominion University	University of Rochester
Duke University	Pennsylvania State University	University of South Dakota
Dutchess Community College	Prescott College	University of Virginia
Edmonds Community College	Recording Workshop	Washington University in St Louis
Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts	Rochester Institute of Technology	Western Governors University
Franklin & Marshall College	Saint John's College	Widener Law School
Full Sail University	Saint Louis University	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
George Mason University	Saint Mary's Public Honors College	
Gnomon School of Visual Effects	Sarah Lawrence College	
Hampshire College	Shippensburg University	

Other Colleges To Which Circle School Graduates Have Been Admitted¹²

Beloit College	Le Moyne College
Bryn Mawr College	Lehigh University
Catholic University	Montana State University
Chatham University	Mount Holyoke College
Claremont McKenna College	Northern Arizona State University
Dickinson College	Northwestern University
Drexel University	Notre Dame University
George Washington University	Reed College
Goucher College	San Francisco Theological Seminary
Guilford College	Susquehanna University
Harvard Divinity School	University of Arizona
Illiff School of Theology	University of Delaware
Indiana University	University of Illinois
James Madison University	Wellesley College
Johns Hopkins University	Wilson College

¹² Includes all post-secondary degree programs