

Certificates: An Underappreciated Credential

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August 3, 2013



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Certificates Are a Growing Option

- The number of certificates awarded has skyrocketed more than 800 percent over the past 30 years. In 1984, less than 2 percent of adults 18 and older had a certificate as their highest educational attainment; by 2009, the percentage grew to almost 12 percent.
- Twenty-four percent of workers report having attended a vocational, technical, trade, or business program.
- Eighteen percent earned a certificate, and one-third of this group also earned an Associate's or Bachelor's degree.
- One-third of those that had a higher degree earned their certificate after they had their degree.



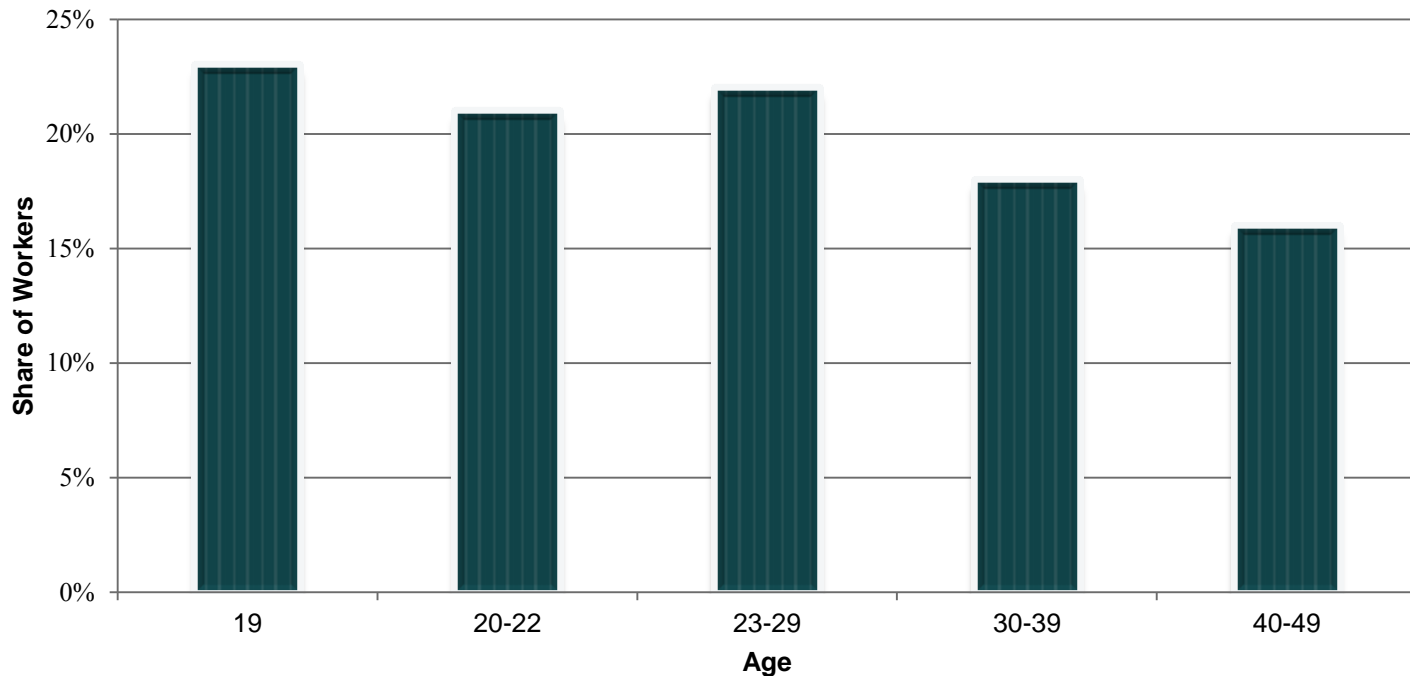
Certificate Programs Vary in Length

- **Short-term certificates require less than one year of instructional time.**
- **Medium-term certificates require one to two years of instructional time.**
- **Long-term certificates require two to four years of instructional time.**
- **Some states have found that short-term certificates don't provide a large earnings boost over the earnings of HS graduates. But this hasn't been validated nationally.**



Certificates Can be Earned Throughout a Career

While 44 percent of certificate holders earned their credential by age 22, 34 percent earned them after 30.



Certificates Focus on Training for Middle-Skill Jobs

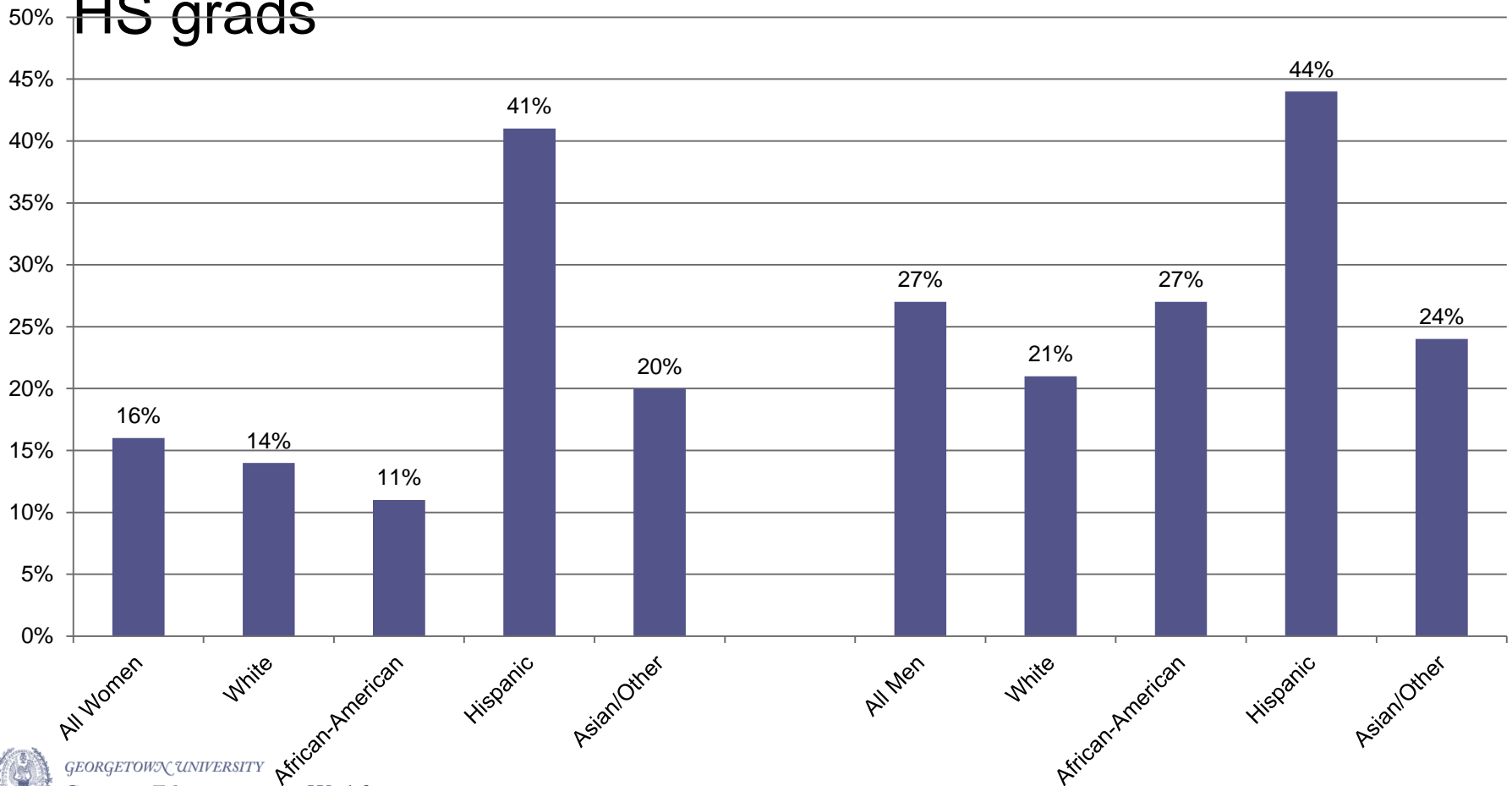
- Women who earn certificates are concentrated in just a few fields: health care (37 percent), business and office management (28 percent), cosmetology (21 percent), and computers/IT (9 percent).
- Male certificate holders vary more by field than women: auto mechanics (18 percent), construction trades (15 percent), electronics (12 percent), 8 percent each in computers/IT and metal working, and 7 percent each in refrigeration/heating and air conditioning and transportation and materials moving.
- There are very few fields that aren't dominated by one gender (80 percent or more).



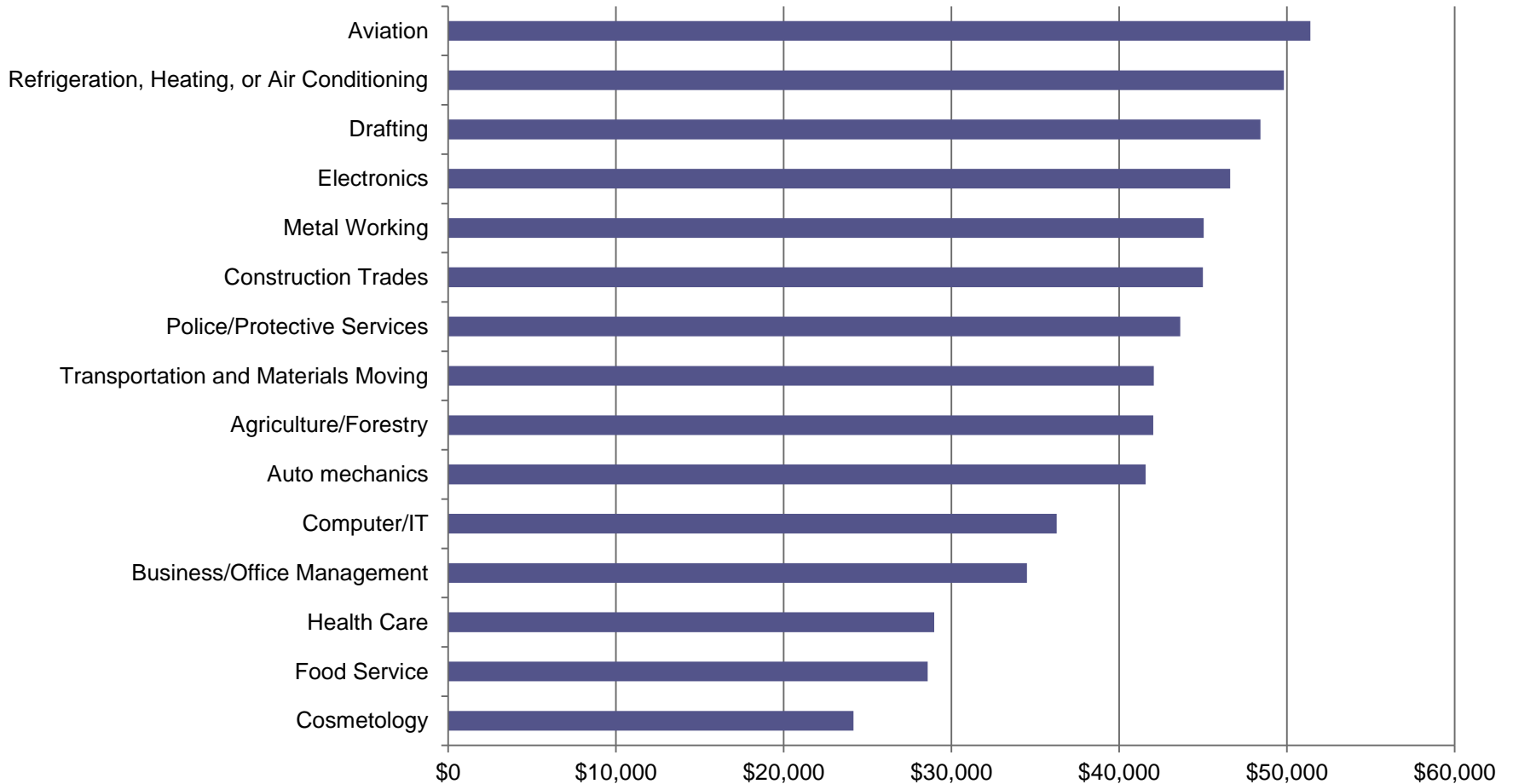
with Men Getting a Much Bigger Boost than Women

Extra Earnings that Certificate Holders Have over

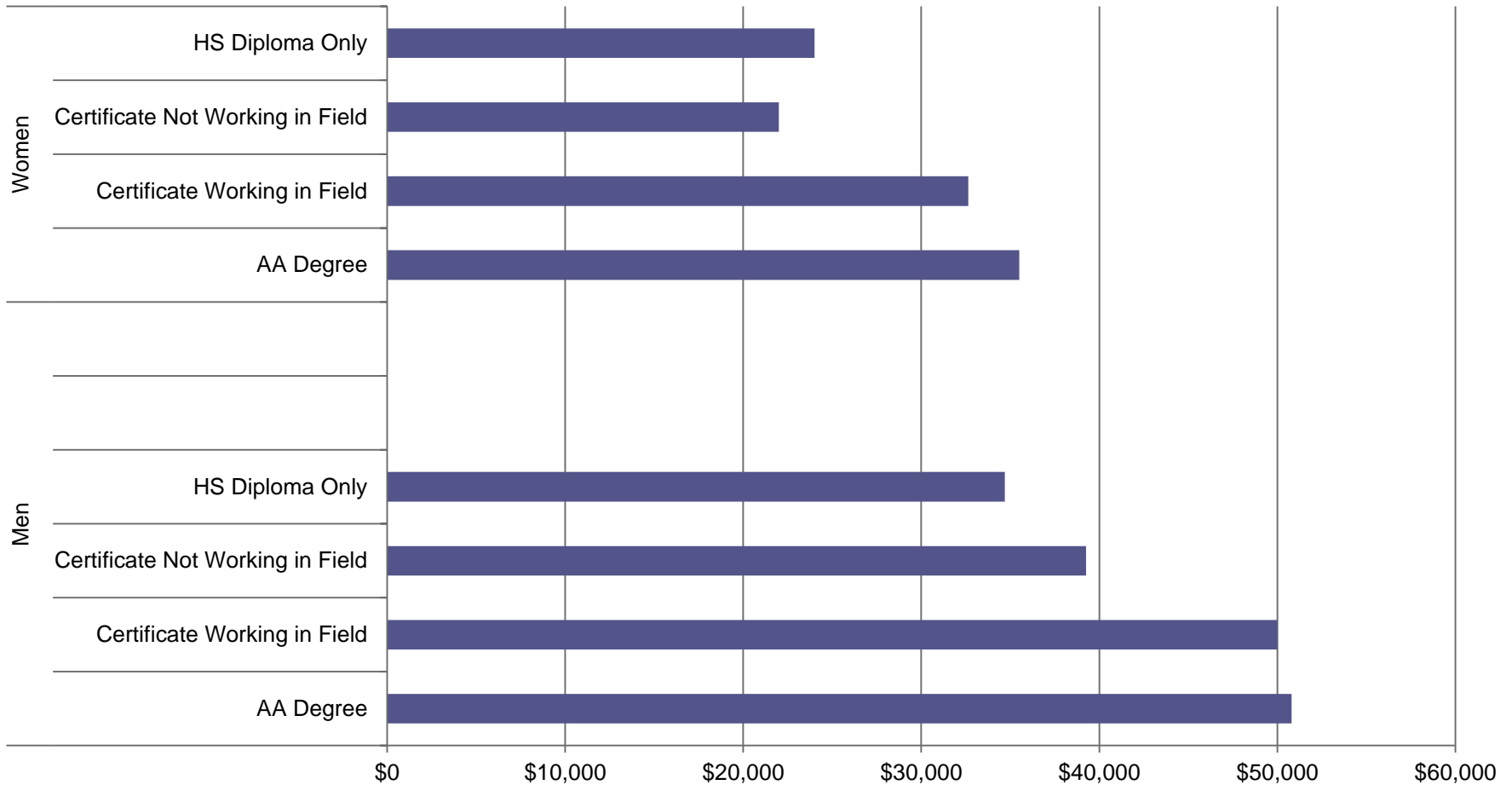
HS grads



Field of Study Matters a Lot



Working in Field is also Very Important



Questions?

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