

# Income Based on Major(PBS)[2016]

More African-Americans are going to college than ever before. But according to [new research](#) from the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University, African-American college students are more likely to pursue majors that lead to low-paying jobs, setting up many for future debt and underemployment. And over time these occupational choices contribute to the wealth and opportunity gap between whites and blacks that spans generations.

“Basically, African-Americans have been going to the right church but sitting in the wrong pew,” director Anthony Carnevale said. “In a way they are using education to climb the social and economic ladder, but they’re being steered toward majors that will make them low-earners.”

African-Americans make up only a small percentage of some of the highest-paying of majors, including those in STEM and business. They’re only 8 percent of engineering, 7 percent of mathematics and 5 percent of computer science majors. Worse, Carnevale said even those who do major in high-paying fields, typically choose the lowest paying major within them. For example, the majority of black women in STEM typically study biology, the lowest-paying of the science discipline. Among engineers, most black men study civil engineering, the lowest-paying in that sector.

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/education/african-americans-over-represented-among-low-paying-college-majors>

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