



Research in the News

Questions
About
the Article ?

MEDIAN LIFETIME EARNINGS

If you are feeling a bit overwhelmed and wondering whether going to college was worth it, a story from the *Washington Post* will lift your spirits. It highlights a study that utilized census data to investigate the lifetime earnings of people by their level of education. The study also examined the difference in lifetime earnings across many different college majors. If you are taking this class, you are probably not getting your major to make millions of dollars, but to help people and improve society in some way, right? The article presents a bar graph of the “median” lifetime earnings by college major. While engineering and computer science majors are at that top of the pack in terms of earnings, criminal justice and criminology majors are above many majors.

1. Why do you think the research presented median earnings rather than mean earnings over the lifetime?
2. What other statistics would you like to know from this article?

Source: Guo, Jeff. 2014. “Want Proof College is Worth It?” *Washington Post*, September 29. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/storyline/wp/2014/09/29/want-proof-college-is-worth-it-look-at-this-list-of-the-highest-paying-majors/>