



The Center for
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**PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release**

From Wall Street to Wal-Mart: Why College Graduates are not Getting Good Jobs

Washington, DC – A new study by The Center for College Affordability and Productivity (CCAP), *From Wall Street to Wal-Mart: Why College Graduates are not Getting Good Jobs*, reveals that colleges and universities are turning out graduates faster than America’s labor markets are creating jobs that require college degrees. The report finds that in 2008, 34% of all employed college graduates were filling below college-level jobs. For example, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 17.5% of office clerks, 17.4% of baggage porters/bellhops and 15.2% of taxi drivers had at least a bachelor's degree in that year.

The report’s findings suggest that a severe mismatch exists between educational preparation and American labor-market needs. The economy is saturated with an oversupply of college graduates, forcing many debt-straddled graduates to fill low-paying, low-skill jobs. The underemployment problem is systemic, and the federal government’s current effort at “gainful employment,” which is directed primarily at for-profit institutions, misses this much wider problem.

Other highlights from the report include findings that:

- America’s underemployment problem is not simply a symptom of the current economic recession, but rather a continuation of a long-term trend.
- As the proportion of Americans with college degrees has climbed over time, college-level job creation has not kept pace. In 1970, only 9.8% of college graduates were underemployed. This grew to 17.7% by 1992 and then rose dramatically throughout the 2000s to 34% in 2008.
- The largest growth in underemployment occurred between 1992 and 2008. In fact, 60% of the marginal increase in Americans graduating from college landed in jobs for which they were overqualified. This suggests that America is producing too many, not too few, college graduates.

This study casts doubt on the objectives of President Barack Obama and other educational leaders that call for drastically increasing the percentage of Americans with a college degree. The authors conclude that:

“If the public objective is to use higher education as a means to form human capital and expand national productive capabilities, it appears much of the recent ‘investment’ in colleges is misdirected.”

A full copy of this study is available for free download [here](#). CCAP Director, Dr. Richard Vedder, is available for phone interviews. To schedule, simply contact Matthew Denhart by phone at (202) 375-7831 or email him at Mdenhart@centerforcollegeaffordability.org.

The Center for College Affordability and Productivity is an independent higher education think tank based in Washington, D.C.

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