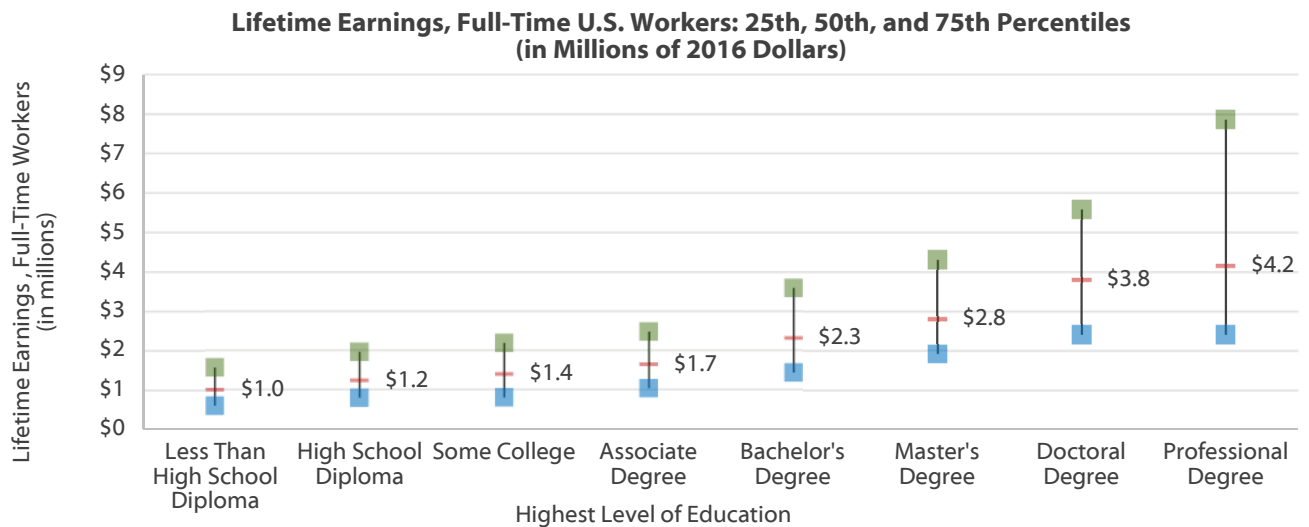
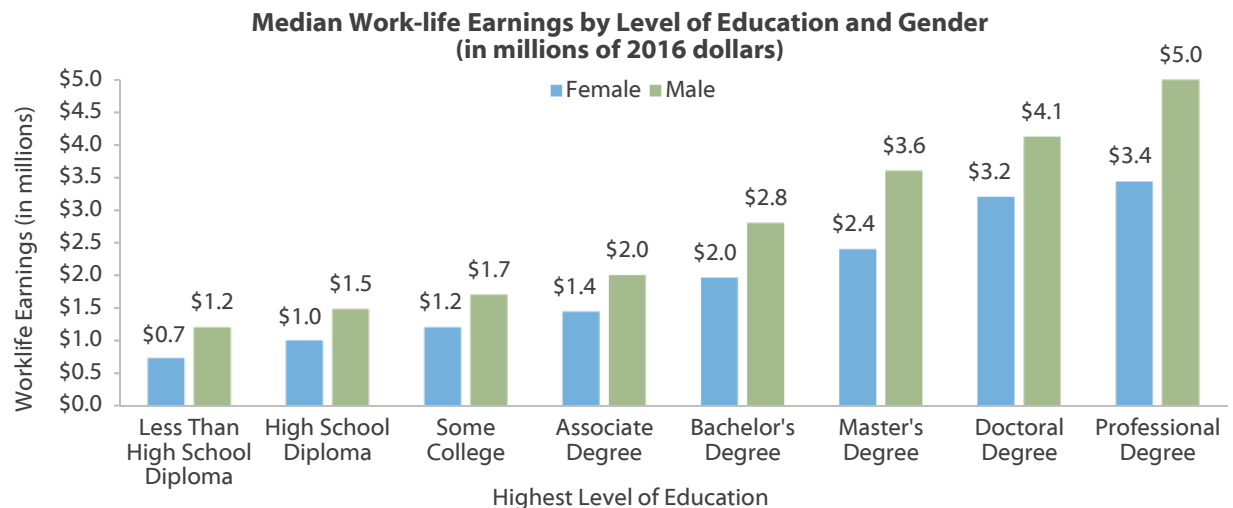


# Better Educated Workers Have Higher Lifetime Earnings



The difference in the salary earned by higher- and lower-educated workers compounds over a lifetime. The estimated earnings during the work-life (approximately 40 years) of a worker who did not complete high school is about \$1 million. Completing high school increases median lifetime earnings by about \$200,000, and completing a bachelor’s degree raises median lifetime earnings to \$2.3 million. Post-graduate education pays off even more; workers with a professional degree, such as doctors and lawyers, can expect over the course of their work-lives to earn an additional \$1.9 million over what workers with a bachelor’s degree will earn. Higher levels of education typically offer increased lifetime earnings, but they also allow for more earning *variability*, as shown by the wider income ranges for the higher levels of education.



Lifetime earnings differences based on education are even more pronounced for women, who must earn at least a bachelor’s degree to make as much as men with some college or an associate degree, on average.

Earnings: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2016 (<http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/pums.html>)

