

STUDENTS' INVESTMENT

The Economic Value of Thomas Nelson Community College | September 2016

Education has the power to raise students' earning potential and increase their employability. In return for their investment in education, Thomas Nelson's 2014-15 students will receive higher wages throughout their working lives.

EDUCATION RETURNS VALUE FOR MONEY SPENT

- To meet the costs of going to the college, students rely on their own earnings or on the earnings of their families. At Thomas Nelson, students paid a total of **\$26.2 million** in FY 2014-15 to cover the cost of tuition, fees, books, and supplies.
- While at college, students spend time focusing on their studies, time they would have otherwise spent in employment or with their families and friends. For Thomas Nelson students, the value of time and earnings forgone was estimated to be **\$82.3 million** (less offsetting monies received from residual aid).
- In return for the costs of going to the college, students will receive a stream of higher lifetime earnings. These wage gains will fully recover the money that students invested and will continue to grow throughout the students' working lives.

EDUCATION INCREASES EARNING POTENTIAL

- Average annual earnings increase as students attain higher levels of education. On average, associate's degree completers in the Virginia Peninsula will earn \$40,400 at the midpoint of their careers, **\$10,900** more than someone with a high school diploma.
- Associate's degree completers will earn **\$1,512,400** (undiscounted) over their working lifetime, an increase of \$406,600 compared to someone with a high school diploma.

EDUCATION IS A KEY INVESTMENT FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

- Thomas Nelson's 2014-15 students will receive an average annual rate of return of **15.3%** on their investment in the college. This rate of return continues throughout their working lives
- Had students and their families taken the money they spent on education and invested it instead in a standard bank savings account, they would have received a rate of return of less than 1%.
- On average, Thomas Nelson's 2014-15 students will receive a cumulative **\$3.60** in higher future earnings for every \$1 they invested in their education.

HIGHER EARNINGS BY EDUCATION LEVEL AT CAREER MIDPOINT IN VIRGINIA

