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College Grads: Which Ones Earn the Most?

Bridget Quigg, PayScale.com, Yahoo! HotJobs

Have you ever wondered if Stanford grads really do make the big bucks, or if a "party school" degree can still land you a high-paying job?

Online salary database PayScale.com put together a [2009 College Salary Report](#) that highlights which college graduates make the highest and lowest salaries right out of college and how that changes 10 years post-graduation.

While it may be no surprise that social work came in as the least well-paid major overall in PayScale's report, you may not know that Dartmouth's grads fare better financially 10 years after college than Harvard's.

Whether you went to a small, liberal arts college or graduated from an Ivy League school, take a look at the list below to see if your alma mater made a top 10 earners list.

School Name / Starting Median Salary / Mid-Career Median Salary

1. Dartmouth College: \$58,200 / \$129,000
2. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT): \$71,100 / \$126,000
3. Harvard University: \$60,000 / \$126,000
4. Harvey Mudd College: \$71,000 / \$125,000
5. Stanford University: \$67,500 / \$124,000
6. Princeton University: \$65,000 / \$124,000
7. Colgate University: \$51,900 / \$122,000
8. University of Notre Dame: \$55,300 / \$121,000
9. Yale University: \$56,000 / \$120,000
10. University of Pennsylvania: \$60,400 / \$118,000

Maybe you didn't get to attend one of these top schools, but there's another factor that may contribute to a higher paycheck: your major.

According to Al Lee, PayScale's director of quantitative analysis, "Even more than where you go to school, the degree you get is a bigger influencer of your pay for the vast majority of Americans." Lee says that an English major from Harvard may end up making six figures, but that person is an exception among English majors.

Which degrees bring home the most bacon? "Ones involving numbers," says Lee. Seven of the 10 highest-earning undergraduate degrees in the report are in [engineering](#), with economics, physics, and computer science filling out the rest.

Undergraduate Degree / Starting Median Salary / Mid-Career Median Salary

1. Aerospace Engineering: \$59,600 / \$109,000
2. Chemical Engineering: \$65,700 / \$107,000
3. Computer Engineering: \$61,700 / \$105,000
4. Electrical Engineering: \$60,200 / \$102,000
5. Economics: \$50,200 / \$101,000
6. Physics: \$51,100 / \$98,800
7. Mechanical Engineering: \$58,900 / \$98,300
8. Computer Science: \$56,400 / \$97,400
9. Industrial Engineering: \$57,100 / \$95,000

10. Environmental Engineering: \$53,400 / \$94,500

What other interesting facts did PayScale discover?

- Philosophy majors earn more 10 years after college than business administration and nursing majors.
- Two of the 10 most popular jobs held by Harvard University grads are executive director of a nonprofit organization and high school teacher.
- Loma Linda University graduates have the highest median starting salaries at \$71,400 per year. That's over \$6,000 more per year than a Princeton grad.
- The top paid English majors are [technical writers](#).
- The top paid political science majors are intelligence analysts.

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