

Muskegon Chronicle



'THE FUTURE OF POLICING'

THE NATION'S LARGEST POLICE FLEET OF TESLA CYBERTRUCKS IS SET TO BEGIN PATROLLING THE STREETS OF LAS VEGAS IN NOVEMBER. A4

EDUCATION

Is a college degree worth the price?



People walk around the University of North Carolina campus in Chapel Hill. Research shows most bachelor's degrees still pay off, but not all lead to good salaries. More students are choosing tech schools or trades over four-year universities to avoid debt. AP file

Universities are fighting to prove their return on investment.

Collin Binkley Associated Press

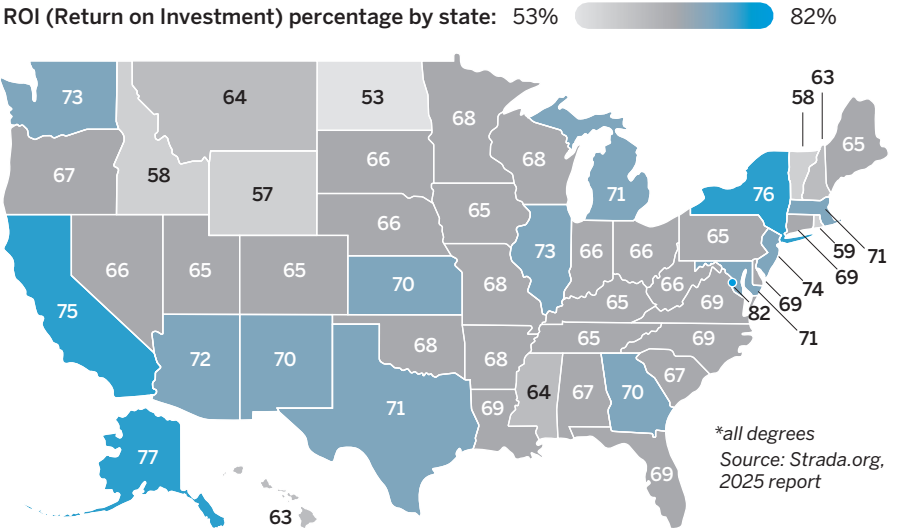
For a generation of young Americans, choosing where to go to college — or whether to go at all — has become a complex calculation of costs and benefits that often revolves around a single question: Is the degree worth its price?

Public confidence in higher education has plummeted in recent years amid high tuition prices, skyrocketing student loans and a dismal job market — plus ideological concerns from conservatives. Now, colleges are scrambling to prove their value to students.

Borrowed from the business world, the term “return on investment” has been plastered on college advertisements across the U.S. A battery of new rankings grade campuses on the financial benefits they deliver. States such as Colorado have started publishing yearly reports on the monetary pay-off of college, and Texas now factors it into calculations for how much taxpayer money goes to community colleges.

“Students are becoming more aware of the times when college doesn’t pay off,” said Preston Cooper, who has studied college ROI at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank. “It’s front of mind

PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES WITH A POSITIVE 10-YEAR ROI



for universities today in a way that it was not necessarily 15, 20 years ago.”

MOST BACHELOR’S DEGREES ARE STILL WORTH IT

A wide body of research indicates a bachelor’s degree still pays off, at least on average and in the long run. Yet there’s growing recognition that not all degrees lead to a good salary, and even some that seem like a good bet are becoming riskier as graduates face one of the toughest job markets in years.

A new analysis released this week by the Strada Education Foundation finds 70% of recent public university graduates can expect a positive return within 10 years — meaning their earnings over a decade will exceed that of a typical high school graduate by an amount greater than the cost of their degree. Yet it varies by state, from 53% in North Dakota to 82% in Washington, D.C. States where college is more affordable have fared better, the report says.

SEE EDUCATION, A3

TRUMP’S PRESIDENCY

Keeping coal power plant open costs \$615,000 a day

Plant owner Consumers Energy expects to see continued orders from the Trump administration further delaying the retirement of the facility.

Lucas Smolcie Larson
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PORT SHELDON TOWNSHIP — Consumers Energy has lost an average of about \$615,000 each day operating a West Michigan coal plant past its intended shutdown date under emergency orders from the Trump administration, and utility executives say there’s no end in sight.

In just over four months, the utility ran up \$80 million in net costs to keep the J.H. Campbell power plant on life support, the utility disclosed in a Thursday regulatory filing.

It arrived at that figure after factoring in revenue from selling power, which still left the utility with losses.

Consumers plans to charge those costs to electric customers in Michigan and 10 other states across a broader Midwestern region.

The costs continue to fuel criticisms from environmental groups and consumer advocates who accuse the Trump administration of unnecessarily burdening power bills to prop up the coal industry.

Utility executives said Thursday they see no reprieve from the U.S. Department of Energy’s orders directing Consumers to delay the plant retirement in the name of grid reliability.

“We expect those to continue for the long term, and we’re prepared to continue to operate the plant and comply with those orders,” said Consumers CEO Garick Rochow on a call with investors.

SEE TRUMP’S PRESIDENCY, A3



In just over four months, Consumers Energy ran up \$80 million in net costs to keep its coal-powered J.H. Campbell Generating Complex in Ottawa County on life support, the utility disclosed in a Thursday regulatory filing. MLive.com files

Michigan congressman backs lawsuit against Cisco

The company is blamed for aiding Chinese persecution.

Dake Kang and Byron Tau
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Two prominent Republicans on Capitol Hill want the Supreme Court to allow a lawsuit to proceed against tech giant Cisco over allegations that the company’s technology was used to persecute members of the Falun Gong spiritual movement in China.

In a Wednesday letter to the Trump administration’s top Supreme Court litigator, D. John Sauer, U.S. Reps. John Moolenaar of Michigan and Chris Smith of New Jersey urged the administration to side with the Falun Gong plaintiffs and

press the court to allow the lawsuit to go to trial.

Smith co-chairs the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, while Moolenaar, R-Caledonia, is the chairman of a special China committee set up in the House of Representatives — and both are prominent critics of Beijing’s human rights record.

The letter cited an AP investigation last month that showed American tech companies to a large degree designed and built China’s surveillance state, saying it “underscore(s) the need to deter American firms from supplying technology to facilitate the CCP’s human rights abuses.”

The decision ultimately rests with the Supreme Court whether to hear the challenge brought by Cisco arguing that U.S. law does not permit such a suit. But as part of considering the case the court sought the views of the solicitor general, who represents the U.S. government’s position in oral arguments and proceedings.

The Trump administration’s view on the case will also be of interest to the court because Cisco has argued that the case involves U.S. foreign relations and should be dismissed on those grounds. The solicitor general is expected to file a brief later this year or early next year.

SEE SUPREME COURT CASE, A3

