

# Effects of Postsecondary Education on Employment Outcomes and Earnings of Young Adults with Traumatic Brain Injuries

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## ■ **A QUICK LOOK:**

Employment outcomes for adults with traumatic brain injury (TBI) are far lower than those of the general population. Participation in postsecondary education, including advanced training at a college or university, is a recognized pathway to employment for the general population. However, little is known about the impact postsecondary education on employment for individuals with TBI as a subpopulation. The purpose of this study was to determine if college or university training influenced employment outcomes for adults with TBI receiving state vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. Findings are discussed below.

## ■ **KEY FINDINGS:**

- Adults with TBI who received college or university training through VR had better employment outcomes than adults with TBI who did not participate in postsecondary education.
- Participating in postsecondary education led to higher weekly earnings for adults with TBI compared to those who did not attend postsecondary education.
- Adults with TBI who participated in postsecondary education worked more hours per week than those who did not receive college or university training.

## ■ **PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE:**

The results of this study indicate that receiving advanced training at a college or university using VR services increases the likelihood that adults with TBI will secure meaningful employment within their community. Findings also indicate that participation in postsecondary education leads to higher quality of employment through higher earnings and more hours worked. Together, these findings have important implications for positively impacting the lives of adults with TBI because employment offers a number of benefits including financial stability, personal autonomy, and a sense of purpose.

## ■ **MORE ABOUT THIS ARTICLE**

This study also highlights the important role VR can play in supporting individuals with TBI who are interested in receiving college or university training. VR agencies are available in every state for individuals with a disability meeting eligibility criteria and have counselors who focus on helping individuals with disabilities get and keep jobs. State VR counselors and individuals with disabilities who are receiving VR services should consider postsecondary education as a valuable avenue toward competitive employment.

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