Education & Employment

What we know about Orange County. . .

Education. Of the adult population (age 25 and older) in Orange County, 65 percent had at least a high school diploma and another 6 percent had a bachelor's or higher degree (based on the most current attainment data from the 1990 Census). At that time, 35 percent did not have a high school diploma.
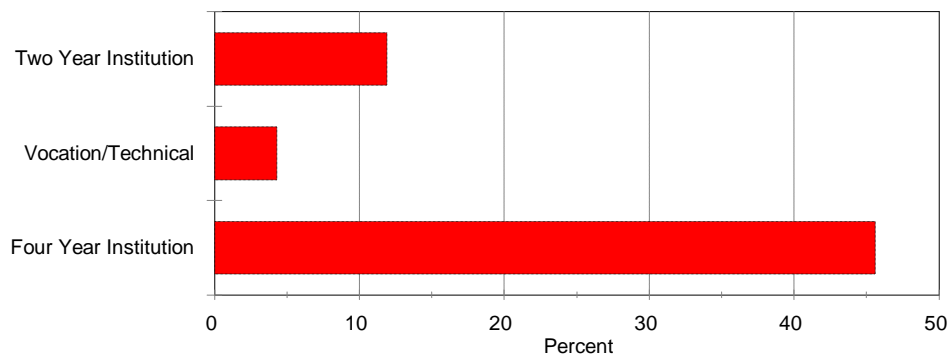
According to Indiana Department of Education figures, of the 235 high school graduates in the 1996/97 school year, 62 percent planned to go on to a secondary education institution (see graph below). The graduation rate in this county was 86 percent (based on grades 9 through 12 for the year 1996/97). The dropout rate, based on enrollment in grades 7 through 12, was 2.4 for the 1996/97 school year in Orange County (38 dropouts). The rate was 4.4 in the 1989/90 school year (68 dropouts).

Employment. There were 8,860 Orange County residents in the labor force in 1997; of those, 8,210 were employed in either full or part-time jobs. The unemployment rate in the county was 7.3 for the year, with 650 persons out of work but seeking jobs.

There were 9,547 jobs* in Orange County in 1996; 28 percent in manufacturing, 13 percent in retail trade, and 22 percent in services. The average wage per job in 1996 was $18,783 and Orange County ranked 82 out of 92 counties.

*Jobs are not equivalent to people since people can hold more than one job; jobs are also held by people who may live in other counties or states and commute.

Graduates to Higher Education
Percent of All Graduates in '96/97

Questions to ponder ...
Is adequate vocational training and on the job training available locally? What skills are employers in this county or area looking for in its work force? Are there sufficient jobs in the area to pay a "living" wage? Is health insurance a benefit most employers in the area offer? Who works with local communities and businesses to develop a work strategy for the community? Are there services available to help welfare families in their transition to work?