Education vs. Income Activity

**\*\*Note – Pass out colored papers according to the number of students in your class! You will have to make that calculation!**

**As students enter the classroom, have students select a colored paper.**

***Read the script below:***

* Ask students to stand up and hold the colored square they chose when they entered the classroom.
* “Everyone standing represents the people who start high school. This activity will show the different paths people can choose during their lifetime and the different results.”
* Ask the students holding the **ORANGE** squares of paper to be seated.
	+ These people represent **19.6%** of the population who did not graduate from high school or earn a GED. On average, they earn $16,234/year, the lowest wages of all workers.
* CONGRATULATIONS! Everyone remaining fished high.
* Ask the students holding the **RED** squares of paper to be seated.
	+ These people represent **28.6%** of the population who graduated from high school or earned a GED. On average, they earn $24,885/year.
* CONGRATULATIONS! The remaining decided to further their education!
* Ask the students holding the **GREEN** squares of paper to be seated.
	+ These people represent **21.0%** of the population who dropped out of college without finishing a degree. On average, they earn $28,264/year which is only a little more than high school graduates. They enter the job market at basically the same level as other high school graduates.
* CONGRATULATIONS! The remaining finished some kind of post-secondary education!
* Ask the students holding the **YELLOW** squares of paper to be seated.
	+ These people represent **6.3%** of the population who received their associate degree. On average, they earn $33,644/year. Jobs requiring an associate’s degree are expected to grow 32% between 2000 and 2010. These people are prepared for this significant change in the job market.
* Ask the students holding the **BLUE** squares of paper to be seated.
	+ These people represent **15.5%** of the population who completed their bachelor’s degree. On average, they earn $48,892/year, which is almost twice what high school graduates earn.
* Ask the students holding the **PURPLE** squares of paper to be seated.
	+ These people represent **8.9%** of the population who completed their graduate or professional degree. On average a master’s degree earns $63,205/year, the doctorate degree earns $86,036/year, and the professional degree earns $96,779/year. Those who receive a professional degree such as a doctor or lawyer earn almost twice what a bachelor’s degree earns.