

# Graduation

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that there is room for them to make opportunities for themselves," he stated. "Yankton has never shied away from an individual that strives to make something happen with their own talent and hard work, and our creative class continues to make gains in creating the environment in which the individual and entrepreneur can succeed."

While the number of adults with college degrees has grown nationally since 1970, the proportion in rural areas has generally fallen behind that found in more urban regions.

"One of the problems that rural areas face is that, in order to get a college education, young people often have to leave," Judith Stallmann, an economist at the University of Missouri, told the Center for Rural Affairs. "Once you leave, that introduces you to other opportunities that you might not have seen had you not left."

Though rural areas have fallen behind with the number of college graduates, they have kept up in other ways.

Those with some post-secondary education but not a college degree rose from 7.8 percent in 1970 to 27.4 percent in 2010. That compares favorably to the national average of 28.1 percent.

In that category, Yankton County went from 13.7 percent in 1970 to 27.9 percent in 2010. The South Dakota average for that year was 31.2 percent.

Overall, Stallmann says, the

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**JUDITH STALLMANN**

Economist at the University of Missouri

trends show that "rural people have responded to the demand for increased job skills by increasing their post-secondary education."

A gap in college graduation rates between different regions of the country has also been growing, according to Mark Partridge, a rural economist at Ohio State University.

He told the Center for Rural Affairs his studies have found that rural counties and counties with small cities in the South and West didn't fare as well as those in the Midwest and Northeast in attracting college graduates. Even though the Sunbelt has seen tremendous growth over the past few decades, the South's rural counties haven't kept up in terms of attracting adults with college degrees.

If an area doesn't have jobs that require college degrees, that can lead to a spiral of attracting less college graduates. That, in turn, can diminish the chances that jobs necessitating a college degree will be created.

Both Stallmann and Partridge said the data on college education rates shows them that rural communities should consider the kind of jobs being created locally.

"There are some communities that are doing things like getting local businesses to put an emphasis on hiring local kids who got a

college education," Stallmann said.

"It really suggests that rural communities that aren't thinking about making themselves attractive to educated people are really going to suffer," Partridge said.

Dellinger said Yankton County needs to focus on attracting a labor force with both college degrees and a post-secondary education but no college degree.

"Surprising to many people, much of the manufacturing sector requires at least the aforementioned educational attainment on all levels and then some," he said.

*This story was written with contributions from Bill Bishop and Roberto Gallardo. Bishop is co-editor of the Daily Yonder (www.dailyyonder.com), an online news publication covering rural America that is published by the Center for Rural Strategies. The Center for Rural Strategies (www.ruralstrategies.org) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote healthy civic discourse about rural issues. Gallardo is an assistant extension professor at the Southern Rural Development Center at Mississippi State University (srdc.msstate.edu).*

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# Trees

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plants and trees will be able to survive this out," Ball said. "However, lots of folks have invested decades in trees and hate to see them go."

Ball noted that the conditions this summer, coupled with the warm winter, have led to the killing of a number of mature pine trees on properties throughout the area. The residents there have grown the trees for decades and use them as a screen for privacy from neighbors.

"The drought and hot weather

has been affecting both very old and very young trees first," Ball said. "The young, established and middle-aged trees have weathered this pretty well so far."

Ball added August and September are the most crucial months for watering trees so they can survive the winter. He said the amount of time for watering trees varies based on the tree and soil. However, he said generally to water a tree for about 30 minutes a day on a lightly misting sprinkler or hose.

"When a green ring around the tree develops, it signals you've watered your tree just about right," he noted.

Ball warned that watering trees too long can kill a tree. He said if you dig down about six inches

into the soil and it stays wet, you should hold off on continuing to water the tree until it dries up.

"The minute this drought ends doesn't necessarily mean that trees are fine again," Ball noted. "Some people might have to spray their trees next spring in order to prevent diseases and pests from recurring."

He added that SDSU Extension is trying to get the word out to people that they need to be watering their trees right now if rain does not come soon.

"Hopefully this drought will be a thing of the past and not a continuing problem," Ball said.

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Dr. Ptacek, who has been practicing in Holt County, Neb., for more than 20 years (and with Avera Medical Group - O'Neill for the past 10 years), said he is looking forward to this challenging new phase in his life. It should be noted that Dr. Ptacek is no stranger to the Avera Sacred Heart Hospital Emergency Department as he has provided physician coverage there for several years.

Dr. Ptacek is a 1984 graduate of the University of Nebraska Medical Center School of Medicine. He completed his residency at the United Hospital Center Family Practice Residency Program in Clarksburg, West Virginia.

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