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More Than 42% of College Bound Are Over Age 35, Many Over 65

Houston – (5/10/06) – In the 87 metropolitan markets surveyed regularly by The Media Audit there are 137.4 million adults and 25.4 million plan to take college level courses in the next 12 months.

“Of the 25.4 million with plans to take college courses, 57.7 percent are between the ages of 18 and 34. The remaining 42.3 percent are age 35 and older,” according to Bob Jordan, president of International Demographics, Inc., which publishes The Media Audit.

“More than 580,000 adults over the age of 65 plan on taking college courses and 165,000 of those are over age 75,” says Jordan. In every age group beyond age 35, there are more women than men planning to attend college level courses... Even over age 75, 88,000 women and 77,000 men plan to take college courses.

A senior citizen attending college today is not the “news story” it was just a few years ago, says Jordan. According to Business Week magazine, “many retirees have long favored college towns for the concerts and lectures, for the football and basketball, or to take courses at state schools virtually free. But now colleges are actively recruiting retirees with housing that allows them to live on or adjacent to campus, and with many of the perks enjoyed by faculty and staff.”

Over Age 50 College Bound

“It shouldn’t be assumed,” says Jordan, “that all those older adults who plan on taking college courses are already college graduates. Among those age 50 plus, just 56.4 percent already have at least one degree and another 28.5 percent say they have “some” college. If these two groups are combined, that still leaves 15.1 percent (age 50 plus) who plan to attend college are doing so for the first time.”

The percentage of adults in each of the 87 markets that plan on taking college courses varies from 10.3 percent in Fort Myers-Naples to 25.3 percent in Ann Arbor. The metropolitan markets that have at least 20 percent of adults who plan on taking college level courses during the next 12 months, are: Ann Arbor, 25.3; Reno, 23.7; Tucson, 23.0; Salt Lake City, 22.9; Colorado Springs, 22.8; Washington, D.C., 22.4; San Antonio, 21.9; Dallas-Ft Worth, 21.9; Columbia-Jefferson City (MO), 21.8; Norfolk-Virginia Beach, 21.1; Omaha-Council Bluffs, 21.0; Miami-Ft. Lauderdale, 20.8; San Diego, 20.7; Greenville-Spartanburg (SC), 20.7; Denver, 20.7; Chicago, 20.6; Albuquerque, 20.6; Eugene (OR), 20.5; Dayton, 20.5; San Francisco, 20.2; Austin, 20.1; Sacramento, 20.1; Portland (OR), 20.1; Jacksonville, 20.0; and Charleston, 20.0.

The Data Source

The Media Audit, a syndicated media ratings service currently covering more than 80 metropolitan markets, provides both qualitative data for media websites as well as for traditional media.

Traditional media – print, broadcast and outdoor – have used The Media Audit data in sales, marketing and management for more than 33 years. In 1998, the survey started providing data on local media websites. The surveys now contain more than 400 fields of qualitative information in addition to quantitative measurements of local web audiences.

Note: If you would like to periodically receive news releases containing market survey data from The Media Audit, please contact us by email (info@TheMediaAudit.com) and leave your name, title, company affiliation and email address.