NYschools with the best and worst ROI
Newsday
Long Island, New York, US

Thursday, November 12, 2026
Page 6,7, Section: TOP STORIES
1107 words, 160in² in size

NY schools with the best

Public colleges rank well, while other institutions catch up in the long term

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ONLY IN NEWSDAY

New York's public universities deliver some of the state's strongest returns on investment, according to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce's 2025 rankings. The center's researchers calculated 10-year ROI by estimating students' earnings 10 years after enrollment, minus what it cost the typical student to attend.

The rankings used data from the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard. The reported attendance costs include tuition, fees and living expenses, minus grants and scholarships for students who received federal financial aid. Public university tuition is based on in-state rates.

Newsday's analysis of the rankings shows that State University of New York and City University of New York colleges provide higher 10-year ROIs than the typical private college in the state:

SUNY Maritime ($340,000)
The nautical college has the highest ROI in the state-run network, with a reported average annual cost of $22,888.

Baruch College ($329,000)
The Manhattan-based public college is the top CUNY for ROI. Its average annual cost is $657, and many students commute from nearby, reducing living expenses. Admissions are competitive, with a 48% acceptance rate.

Farmingdale State College ($274,000)
Also primarily a commuter school, the SUNY college's average annual cost is $6,146. Its acceptance rate is 63%.

Highest ROI

Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences ($492,000)

The college primarily offers programs in pharmaceutical sciences, clinical laboratory sciences, public health, microbiology and biomedical sciences.

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy ($453,000)
The service academy has programs in marine engineering, marine engineering systems, marine transportation and other related areas of study.

Columbia University ($364,000)
The Ivy League university's academic offerings span fields including computer science, economics, political science, psychology and history.

Lowest ROI

Arts colleges account for many of the lowest-ranked schools in New York State's 10-year ROI rankings, producing negative estimated returns, meaning the earnings associated with these programs are less than what it costs to attend them. Jeff Strohl, director of Georgetown's Center on Education and the Workforce, said that the ROI data does not reflect the personal rewards arts school students gain from getting the education that they want. "There is a self-fulfillment aspect that isn't, can't be monetized," he said. "So the question that we need to ask is, to the art major, 'Are you happy?' "

Those with the lowest ROIs were:

Manhattan School of Music (-$134,000)
The school offers bachelor's degrees for music, jazz arts and musical theater majors. "Careers in the performing and visual arts often follow very different trajectories from more conventional professions," Jeff Breithaupt, the school's vice president, said in a statement. Alumni hold Pulitzer Prizes, as well as Emmy, Tony and Grammy awards, and have had "careers on the world's greatest stages," among other accomplishments that "cannot be measured within the first 10 years after enrollment."



BARRY SLOAN

Many SUNY schools like Stony Brook University ranked highly for students' ROI. ■ Video: newsday.tv

School of Visual Arts (-$92,000)
This college — which became a nonprofit last year — focuses on creative and media-related fields, including design, film, photography and video, and animation. School president Christopher Cyphers said the value of a degree goes beyond what a dataset can capture. "Measuring the impact of an artist by the income they earn rather than by their crucial contributions," Cyphers said in a statement, "only reinforces society's notion that their work is unimportant." Art and design program graduates "enter a galaxy of creative industries and establish lasting careers plying their trade."

The Julliard School (-$51,000)
Julliard's academic programs focus on dance, drama and music. "Our graduates go on to build careers as artists, educators, and cultural practitioners, often pursuing advanced degrees and developing portfolio careers," Juilliard said in a statement. Such careers "can take time to develop, with professional opportunities and earnings often growing significantly beyond the first decade after a bachelor's degree." About 40% of current students attend tuition-free, and 95% receive some form of financial aid, the statement continued, which has limited reliance on student borrowing.

Thinking about ROI

The rankings also highlight a trade-off between lower upfront costs and longer-term earnings. While many SUNY and CUNY campuses post stronger initial ROI because of their lower costs, some private colleges offset higher prices with substantially higher graduate earnings.

For example, 10 years after enrollment, SUNY's flagship campuses at Stony Brook University and the University at Buffalo both post higher median ROIs than New York University — by roughly $44,000 and $9,000, respectively. The data shows NYU's graduates eventually surpass both SBU and UB in ROI after 15 years, reflecting the university's higher long-term earnings despite its greater cost.

Strohl said while SUNY and CUNY colleges tend to be regionally oriented, with graduates who stay and work in the same area, other universities may feed more into the national labor market, where there tends to be a greater swing in salaries.

Strohl also warned students against simply looking at all of the "overwhelming amount" of ROI data when deciding which institution to attend. He said the data is most useful to students who already have a list of colleges in which they are interested.

"A student needs to look at that information and use it to help guide them on tiebreaks," he said, "help them narrow down their choices a little bit."

COLLEGE SEARCH

Newsday is launching its Essential Guide to College in New York to help students and families prepare for the college search. Explore the full series and sign up for an email newsletter at **newsday.com/collegeguide**

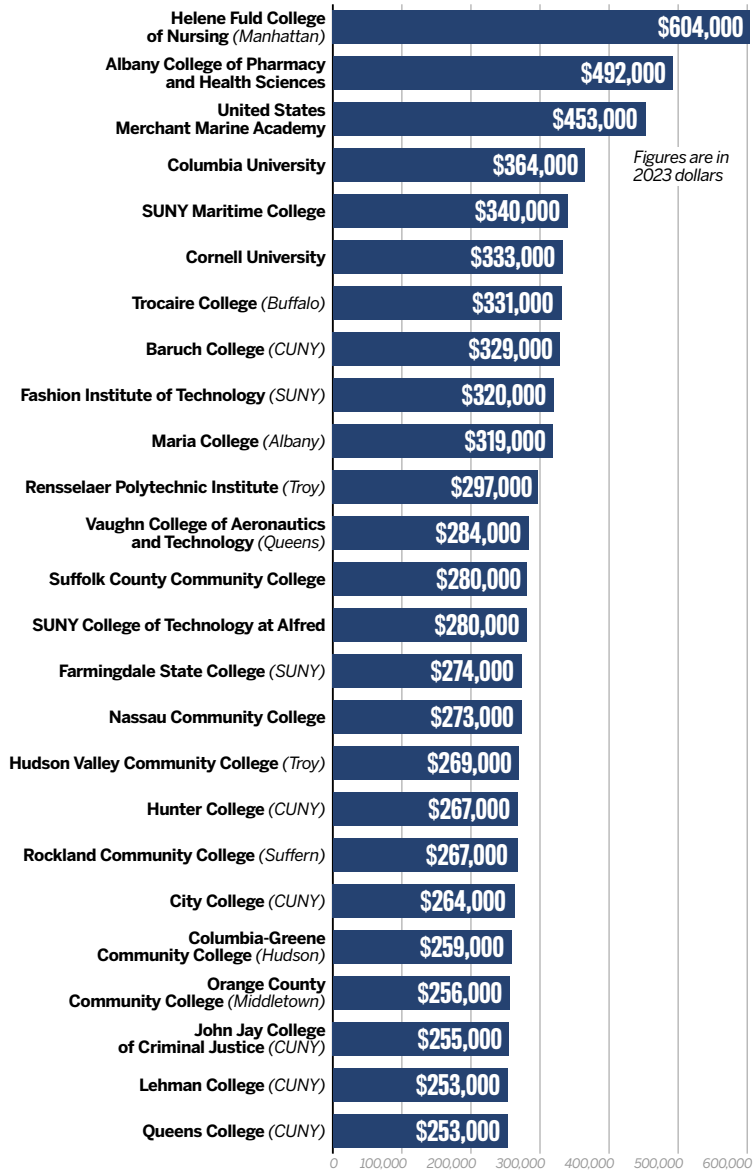
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and worst ROI

TOP 25 IN STATE FOR POST-COLLEGE EARNINGS

Estimated students' earnings 10 years after enrollment, minus what it cost the typical student to attend.



SOURCE: GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

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