

Higher Education Pays:

But a Lot More for Some Graduates Than for Others



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Numbers of Credentials Awarded in US, 2008 and 2012

	Certificates of less than 1-year	Certificates of 1 but less than 2-years	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree
2008	265,454	183,483	732,432	1,554,843	625,002
2012	337,870	286,825	1,017,446	1,787,598	754,229
Growth	27.3%	56.3%	38.9%	15.0%	20.7%

Sub-Baccalaureate Credentials

Figure 2: First-Year Earnings of Completers of the Highest Paying Longer Term Certificate Programs, by State

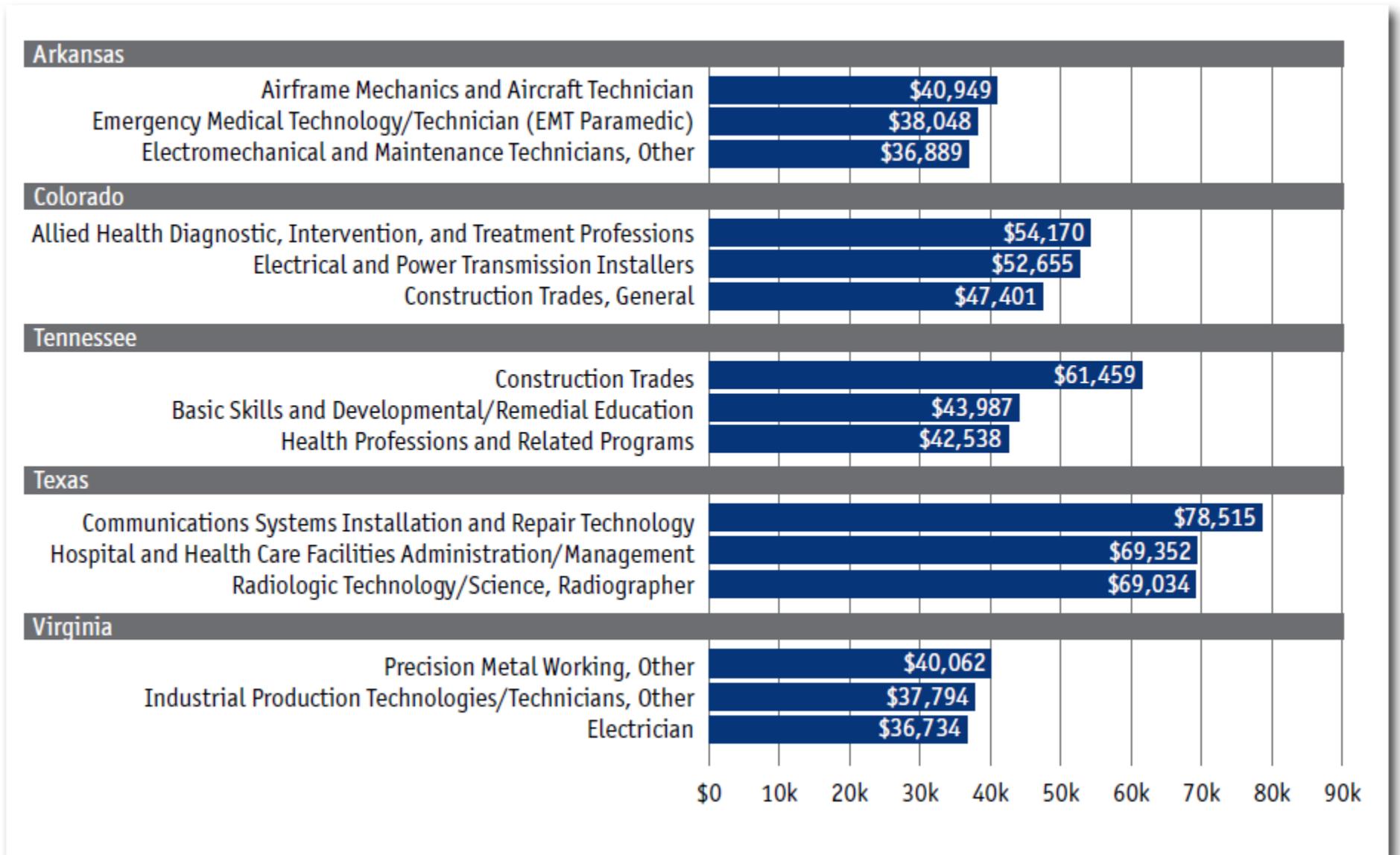


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completers who keep *things* working are high paid

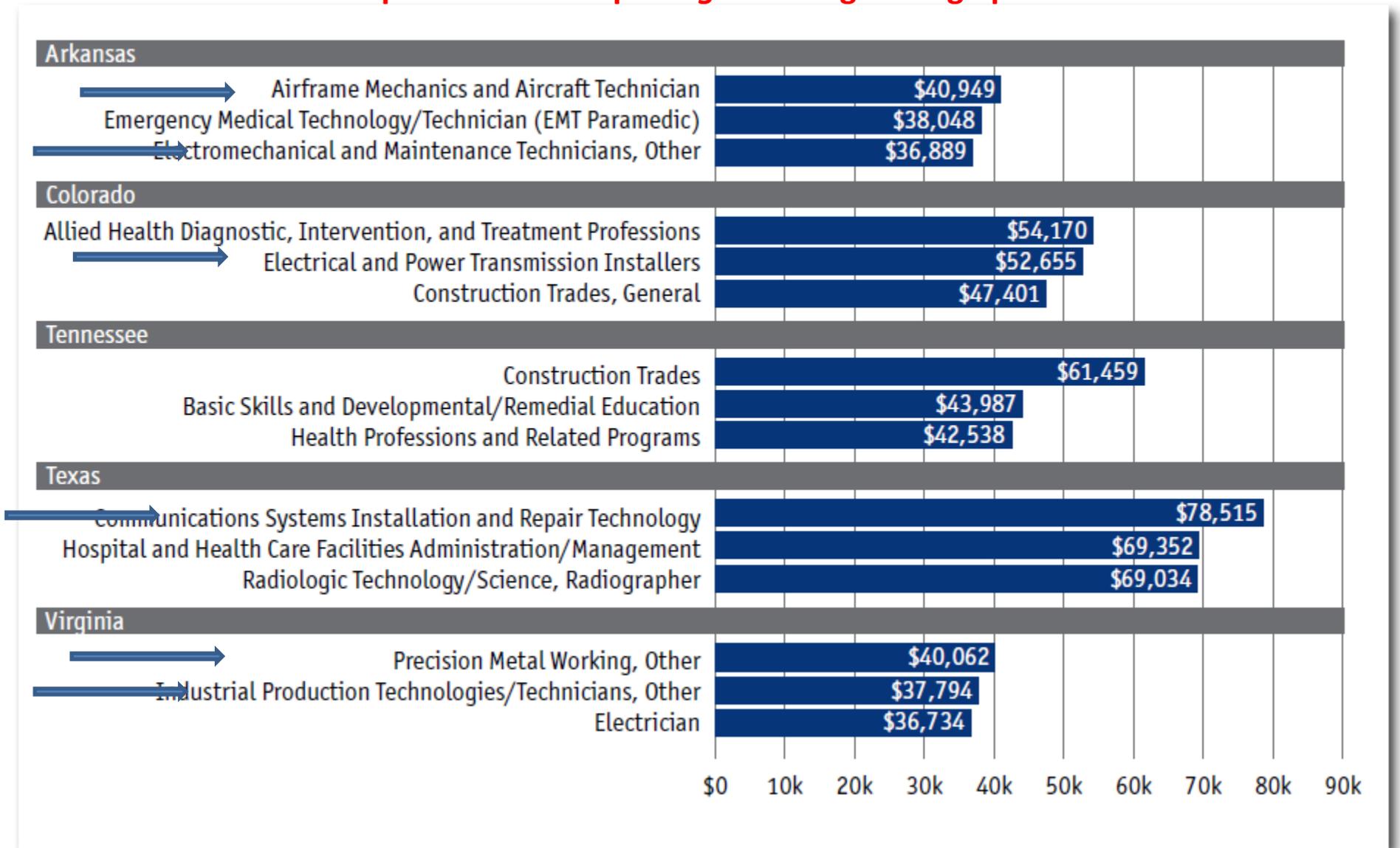


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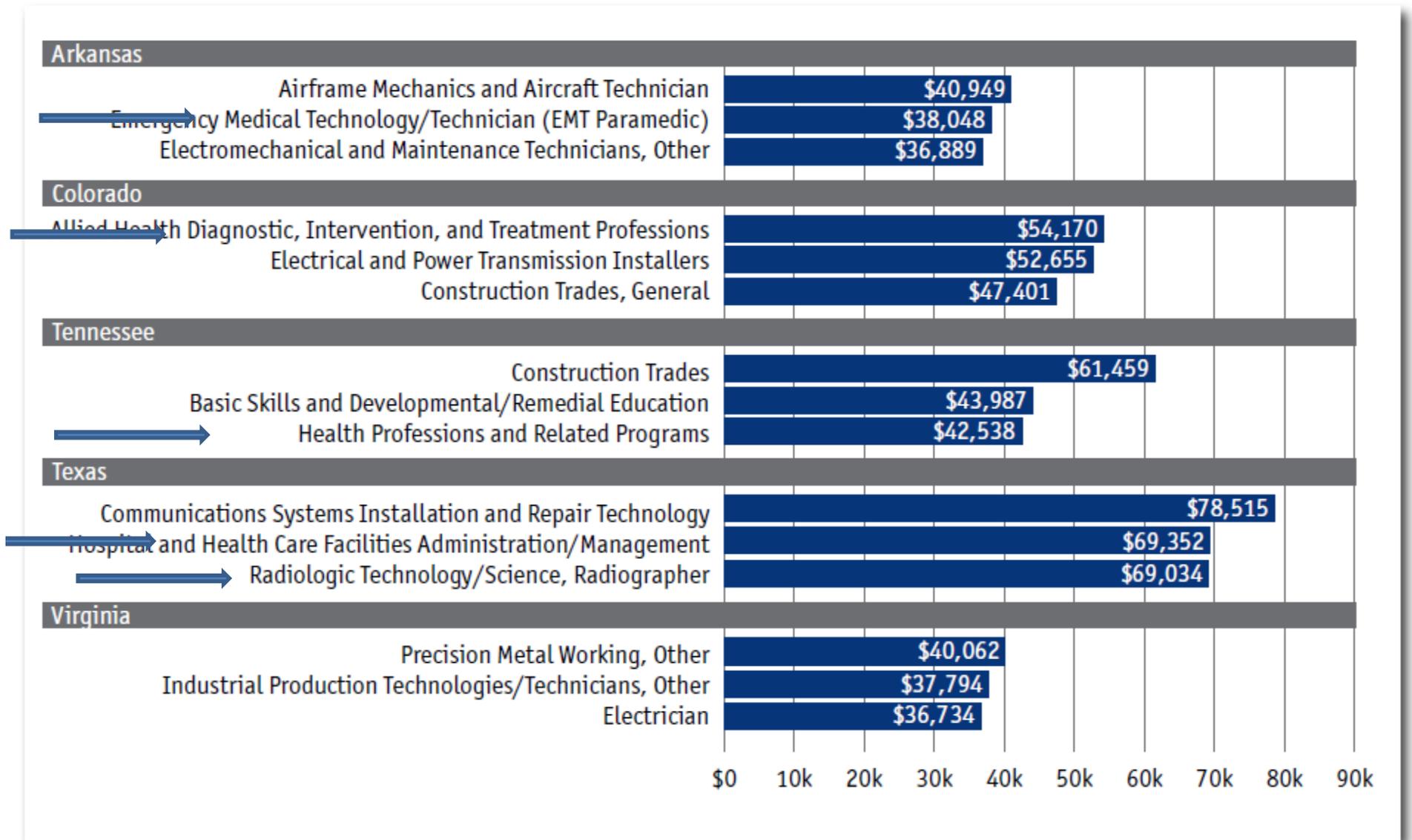
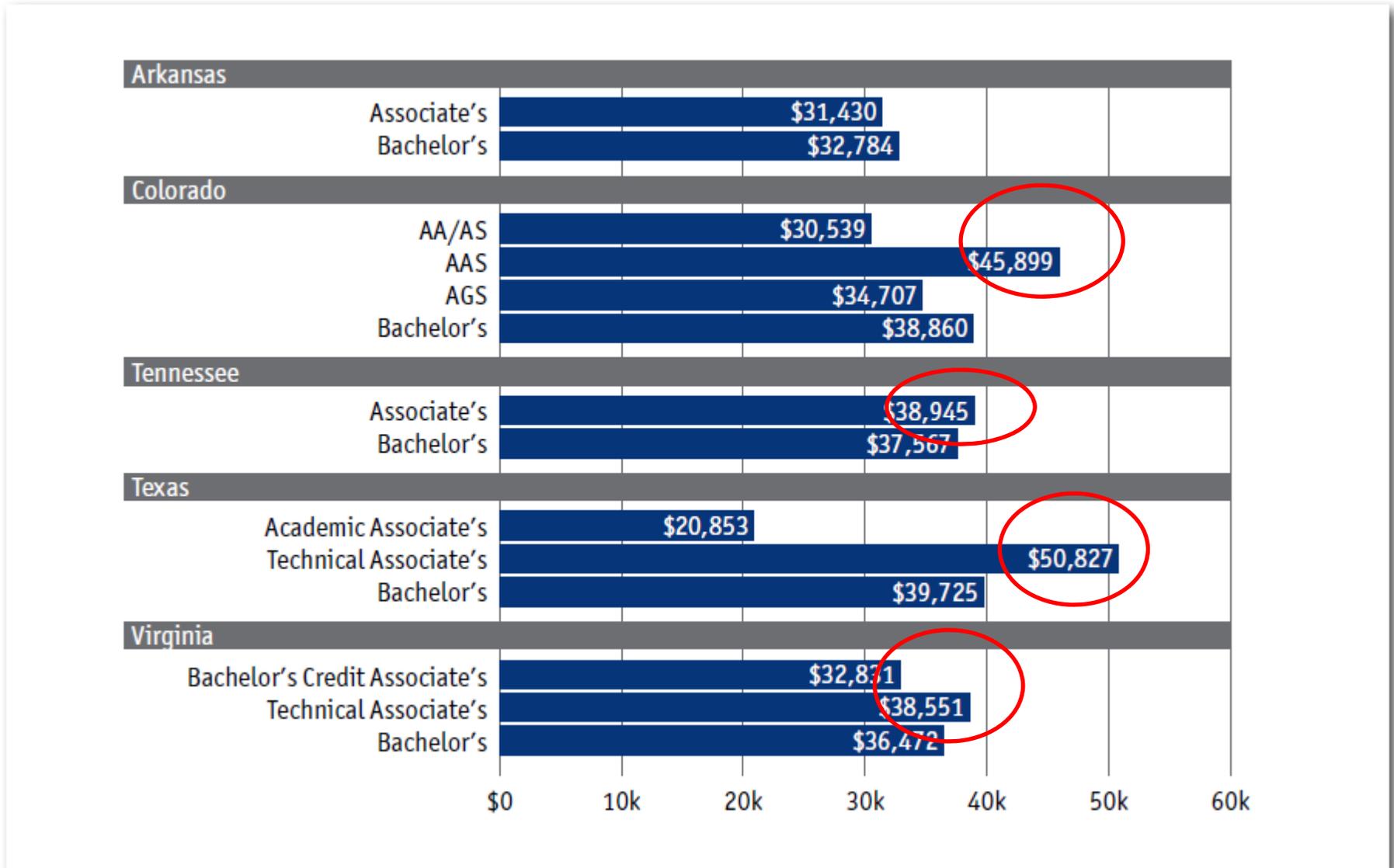
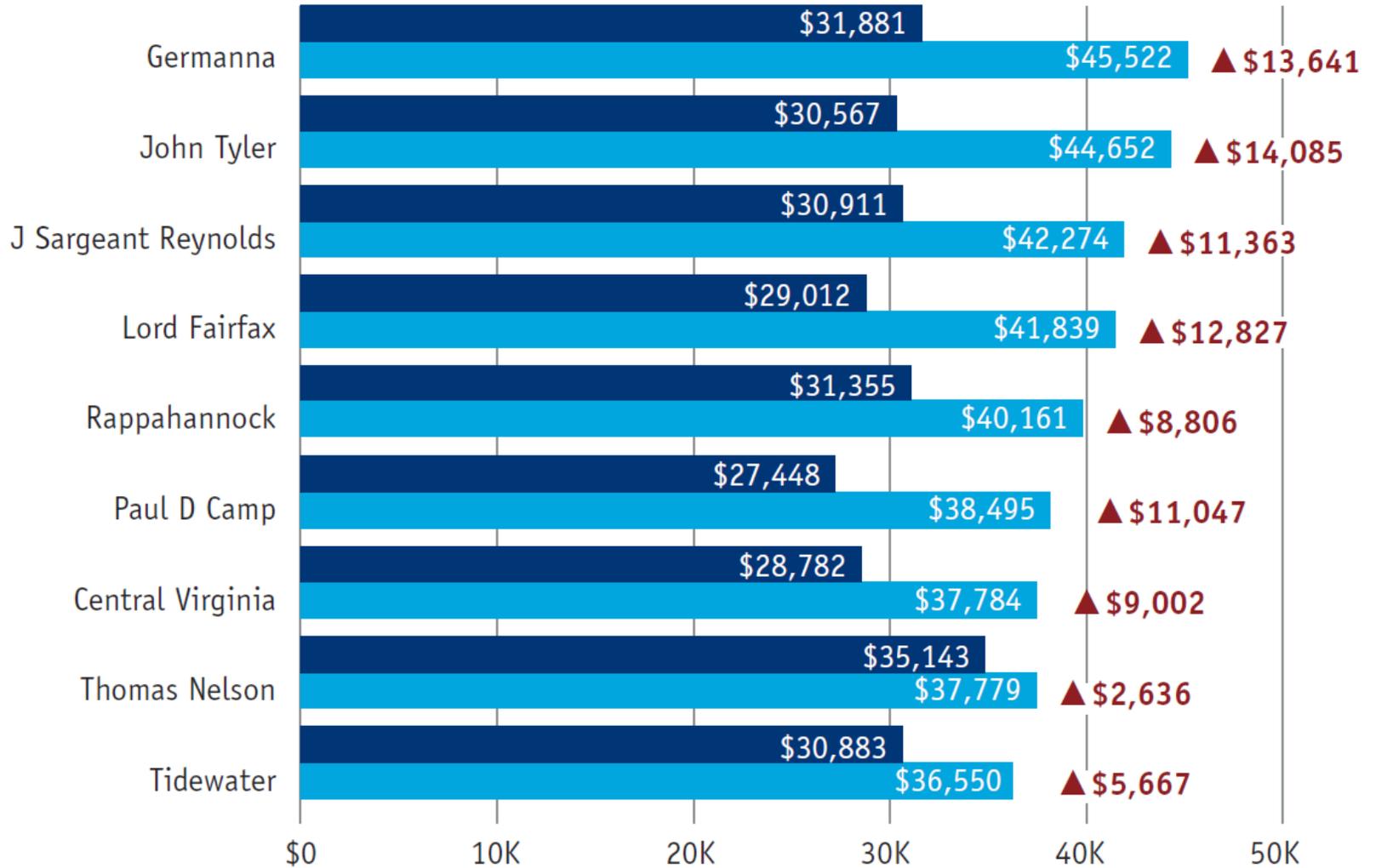


Figure 4: First-Year Earnings of Graduates With Associate's Versus Bachelor's Degrees, by State



The Added Value of Technical Degrees for Graduates of Two-Year Community Colleges Virginia

Key: ■ Associate's Degree Oriented towards Bachelor's Credit ■ Occupational/Technical ▲ Wage Differential



Bachelor's Degree

Average First Year Wages of Bachelor Degree Graduates, Virginia



Bachelor's Degree Graduates From Many Institutions Earn Roughly the Same in Colorado

Institution	First-Year Earnings
Adams State University	\$32,539
Fort Lewis College	\$32,741
Western State College of Colorado	\$33,403
University of Northern Colorado	\$34,918
Colorado Christian University	\$36,065
Colorado State University	\$36,777
Colorado Mesa University	\$37,003
University of Colorado–Colorado Springs	\$37,331
Colorado State University–Pueblo	\$37,726
University of Colorado–Boulder	\$37,735
Metro State University of Denver	\$38,547
Colorado Statewide	\$38,860
University of Denver	\$39,094
University of Colorado–Denver	\$43,804
Regis University	\$53,705
Colorado School of Mines	\$56,671

Table 4: Fields of Study With the Highest and Lowest First-Year Earnings, by State

State	Lowest First-Year Earnings	Field	Highest First-Year Earnings	Field	Difference
Arkansas	\$19,808	Music Performance	\$56,655	Engineering	\$36,848
Colorado	\$24,876	Dietician	\$90,099	Chemical Engineering	\$65,223
Tennessee	\$28,743	Photography	\$54,346	Systems Engineering	\$25,603
Texas	\$15,053	Health Services	\$117,177	Petroleum Engineering	\$102,124
Virginia	\$20,442	Philosophy	\$61,517	Petroleum Engineering	\$41,075

Three are liberal arts

All are Engineering

Figure 8: First-Year Earnings Among Bachelor's Degree Graduates From the Most Popular Fields of Study, by State

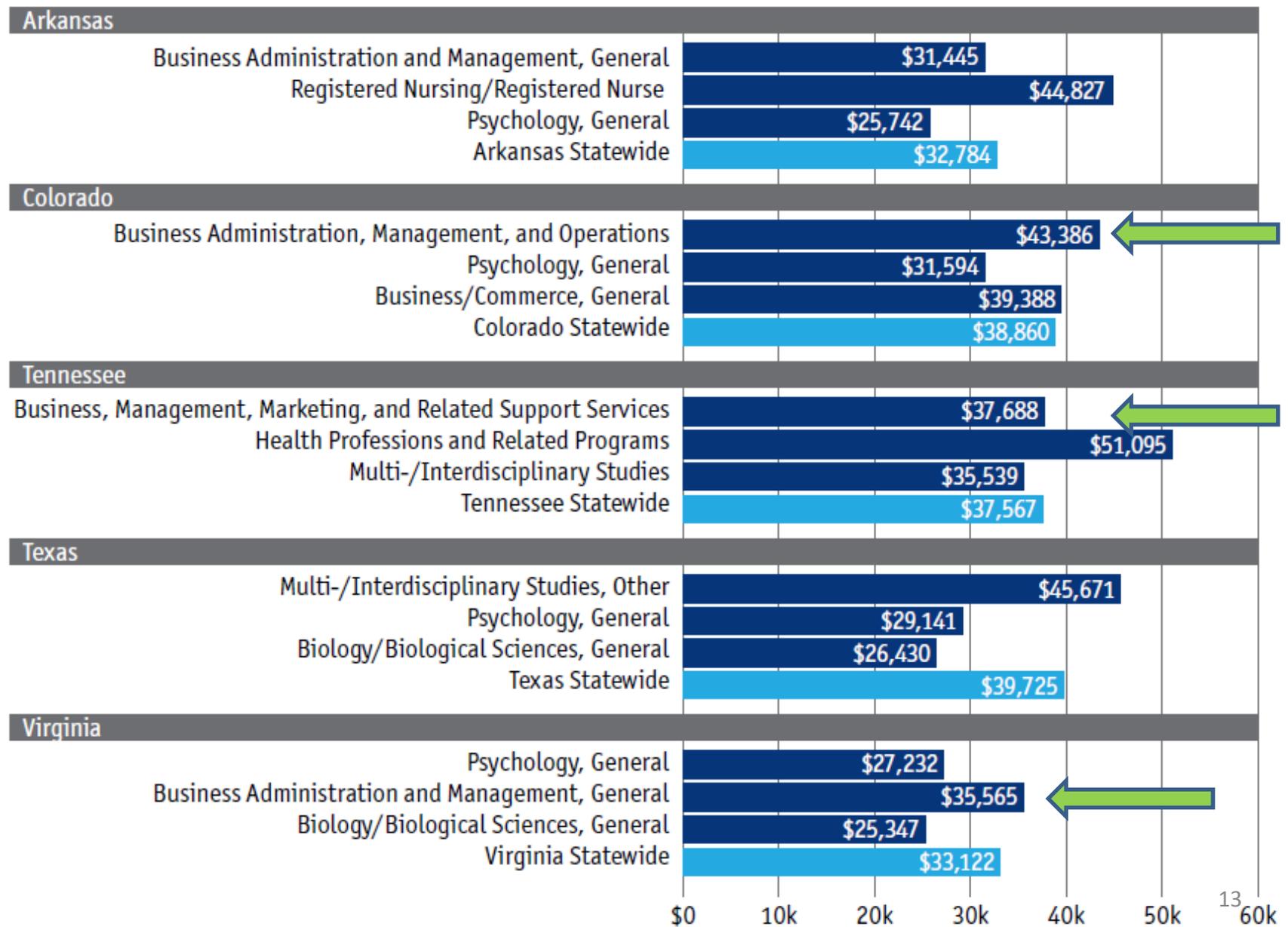


Figure 8: First-Year Earnings Among Bachelor's Degree Graduates From the Most Popular Fields of Study, by State

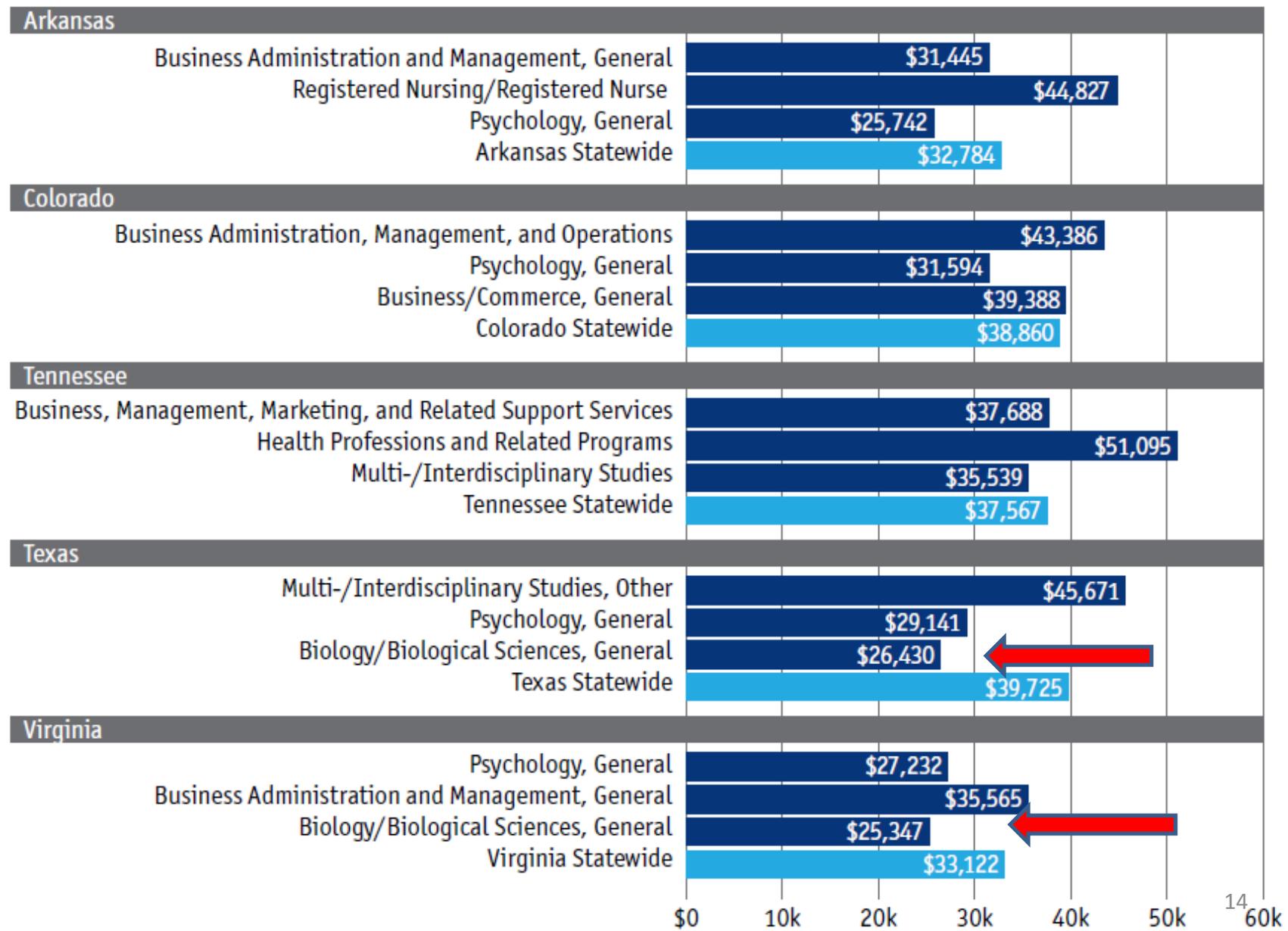
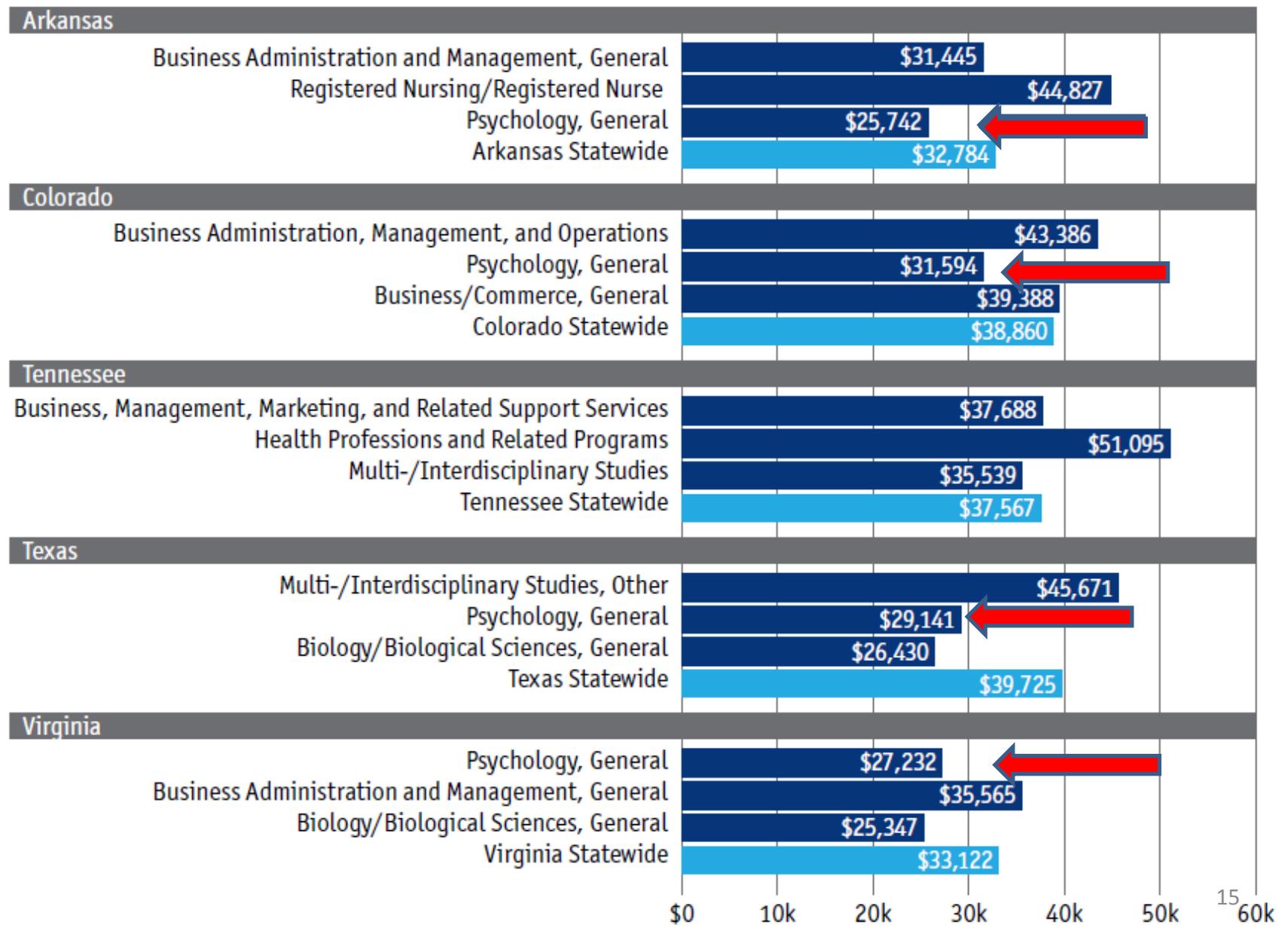


Figure 8: First-Year Earnings Among Bachelor's Degree Graduates From the Most Popular Fields of Study, by State



Master's Degree

Figure 9: First-Year Earnings Between Graduates With Master's and Bachelor's Degrees, by State

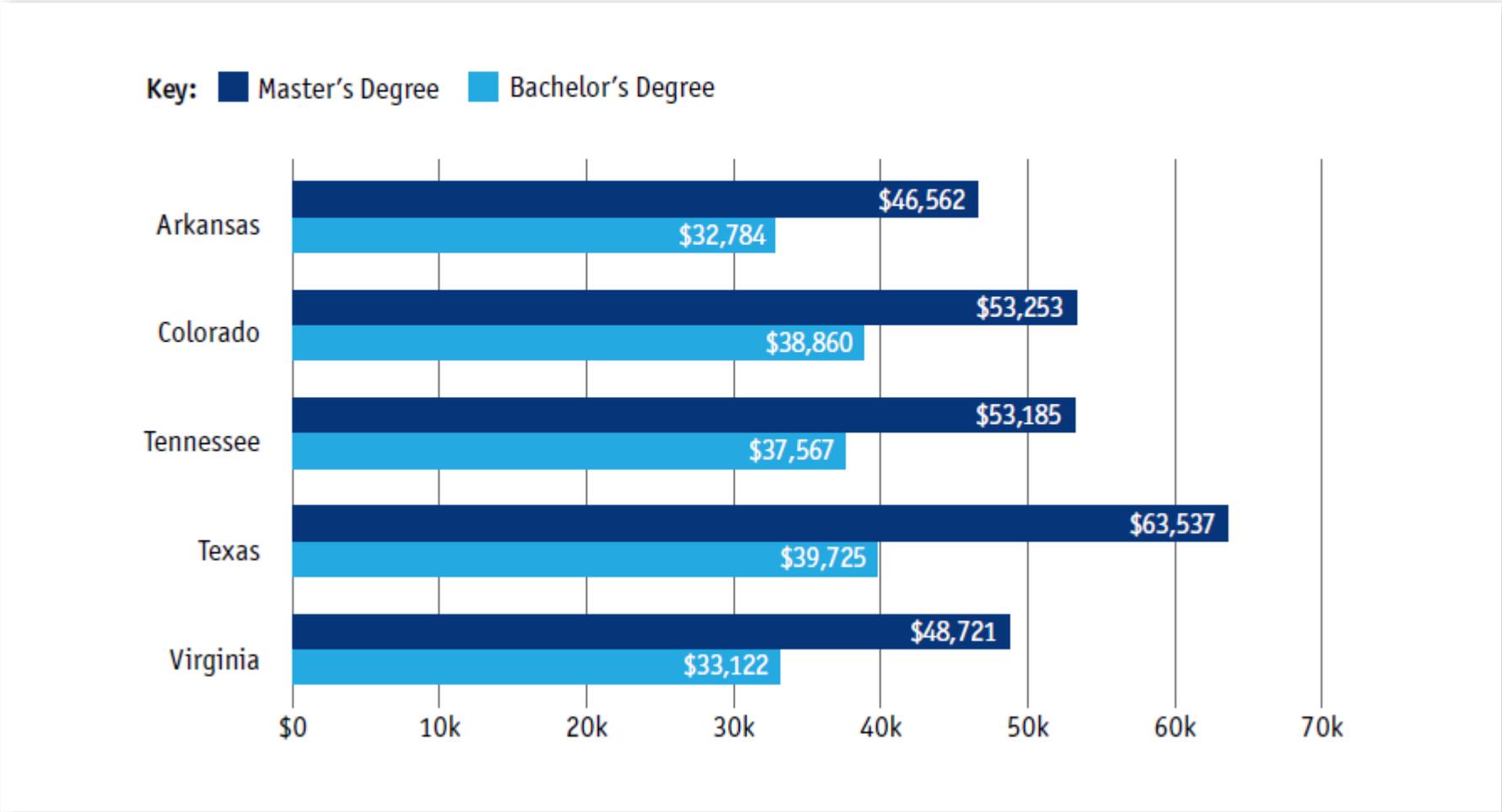
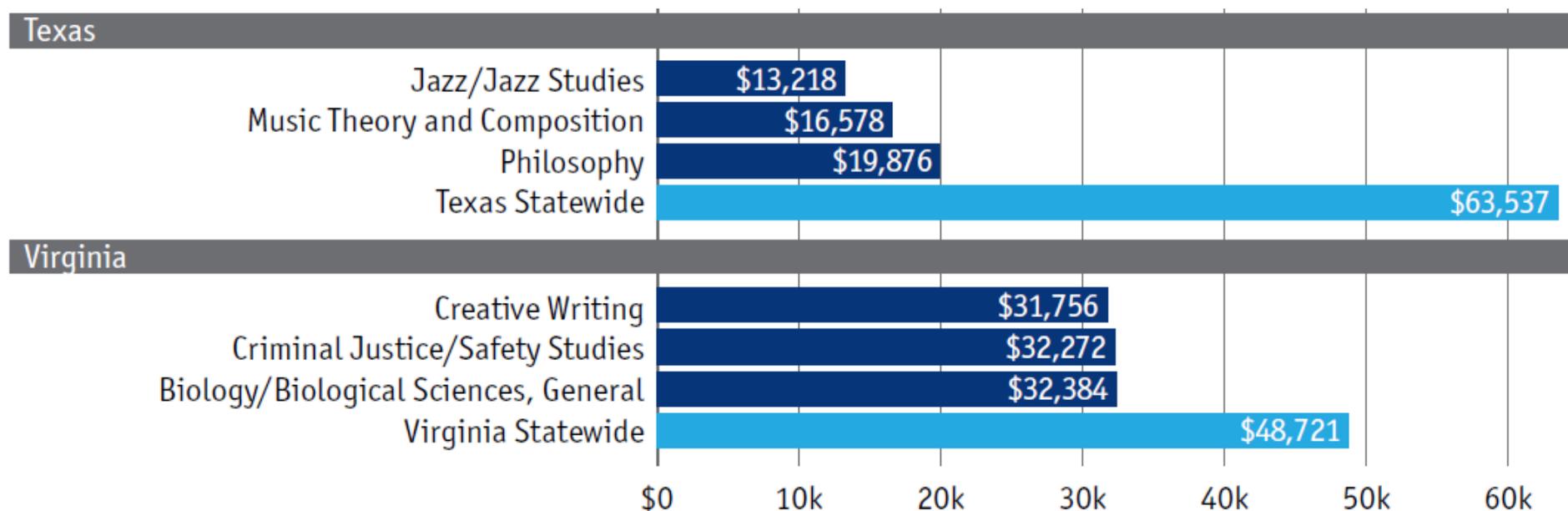


Figure 11: First-Year Earnings Among the Lowest Earning Master's Degree Graduates, by State and Program



Range of Master's Degrees Earnings: Top and Bottom Three Institutions

Texas	
Texas Tech University	\$54,248
Angelo State University	\$54,909
Texas A&M University–Galveston	\$54,984
University of Houston–Victoria	\$68,540
University of Texas–Dallas	\$71,165
University of Houston–Downtown	\$71,338
Virginia	
Radford University	\$37,940
Emory and Henry College	\$38,311
Hollins University	\$38,878
Mary Baldwin College	\$38,888
Eastern Virginia Medical School	\$62,254
University of Richmond	\$64,056
George Washington University (Virginia Science and Technology campus)	\$80,342

\$17k

\$43k

Table 6. Lowest and Highest Earnings in Each State and Size of Differential, by Field of Study

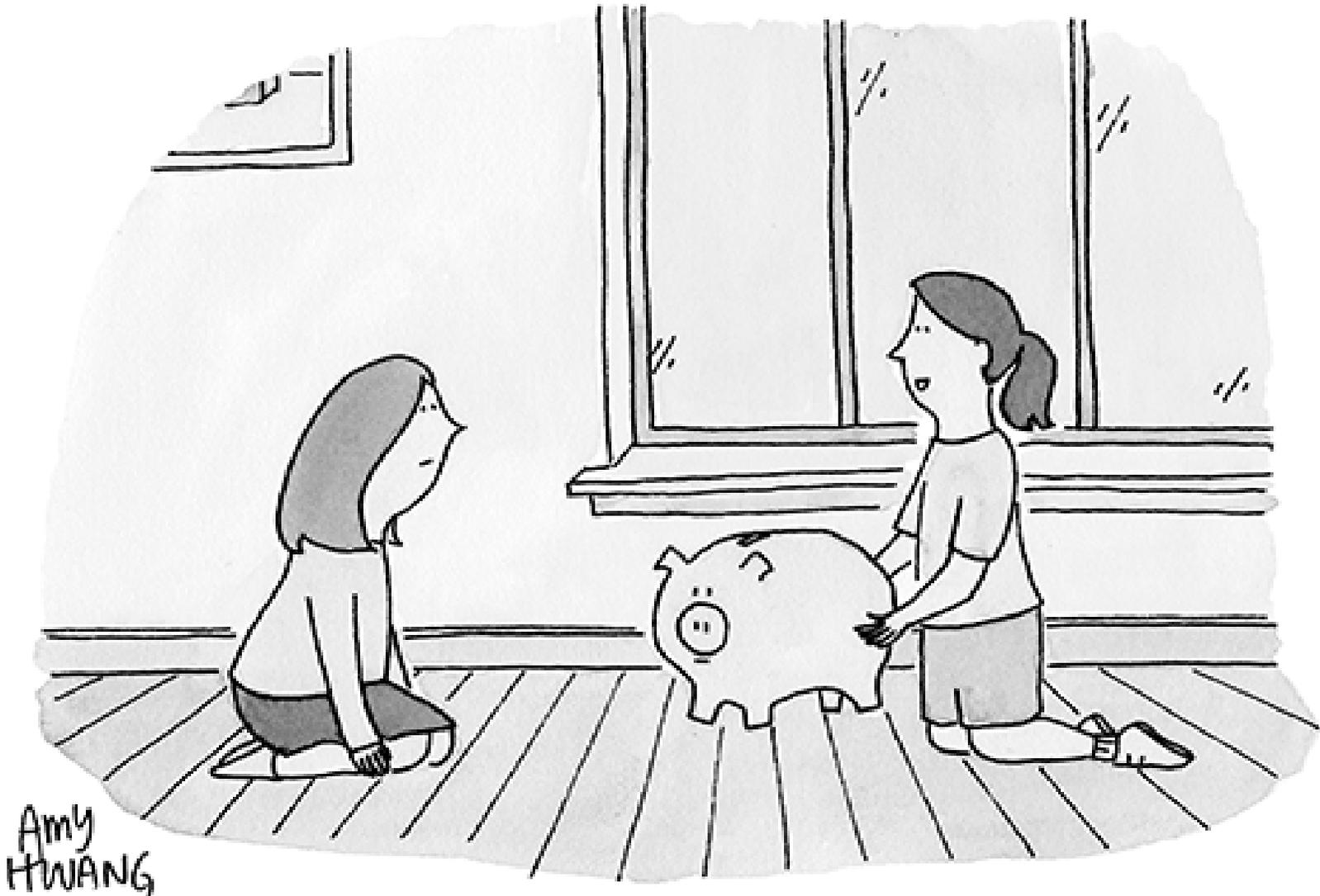
State	Minimum First-Year Earnings	Field of Study	Maximum First-Year Earnings	Field of Study	Difference
Arkansas	\$27,837	Creative Writing	\$141,966	Nurse Anesthetist	\$114,129
Colorado	\$35,922	Human Development, Family Studies, and Related Services	\$102,815	Petroleum Engineering	\$66,894
Tennessee	\$37,883	Foreign Languages, Literature, and Linguistics	\$74,561	Health Professions and Related Programs	\$36,678
Texas	\$13,218	Jazz/Jazz Studies	\$185,331	Banking, Corporate, Finance, and Securities Law	\$172,113
Virginia	\$31,756	Creative Writing	\$130,880	Nurse Anesthetist	\$99,124

Even at Master's level, liberal arts lag

Lessons Learned

- **Subbaccalaureate** credentials can pay off
- **Where** you study matters
 - But there are many paths into the labor market besides state flagships
- **What** you study matters more

A final caution



"I'm saving for when I get a low-paying job doing what I love."