

One category, the immigration of spouses and children of permanent residents, also increased because of the Diversity Program. Anthropologist and ethnographer Leigh Swigart noted that African immigrants have diverse immigration experiences:

Some are sojourners seeking their fortune in the U.S. Many come as students and stay on to work as professionals. Others are fleeing political turmoil in their countries of origin and come as refugees or as asylum seekers. Africans also arrive in the United States following a variety of immigration scenarios. The most common are coming to attend university, obtaining a work visa to practice a specialized profession, marrying an American citizen, being resettled as refugee, obtaining political asylum, winning the U.S. Diversity Lottery, or overstaying a temporary visa to become an “undocumented immigrant.”⁵⁵

When the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies published their research on African immigrants in 2001, they found “Immigrants from Africa have the highest educational levels among all immigrants to the United States. They have on average over three years of college, and over half are college graduates.”⁵⁶ Although the educational attainment of foreign-born from Asia and Northern America surpassed that of African immigrants in the ensuing decade, in 2011, forty-one percent of African foreign-born in the U.S. had a bachelor’s degree or higher (see table 8), the third highest percentage of reported regions.⁵⁷

Table 8. Educational Attainment of African Foreign-Born Population and Total Foreign-born. Population, Age 25 and Over, 2011

	Total		Born in Africa	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Foreign-born population	40,377,860	+/-125,123	1,664,414	+/-29,863
Population 25 years and over	34,383,331	+/-98,200	1,340,821	+/-23,063
Percent of education attainment				
Less than high school graduate	31.5%	+/-0.2	12.3%	+/-0.5
High school graduate or GED	22.5%	+/-0.1	18.7%	+/-0.7
Some college or associate’s degree	18.8%	+/-0.1	28.0%	+/-0.7
Bachelor’s degree	16.0%	+/-0.1	24.5%	+/-0.7
Graduate or professional degree	11.3%	+/-0.1	16.5%	+/-0.7

Source. U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2011, Table S504.