**Higher Education** Share of Bachelor's S&E Degrees Awarded to Women Indicators Enrollments and Minorities

## The number of S&E bachelor's degrees awarded to women and minorities has largely increased over the last two decades, but not in the physical sciences, engineering or mathematics.

Figure 16.1. Earned bachelor's degrees by sex: Selected years, 1985-2005

1985-2005 Minority Share of Science and Engineering Bachelor's Degree: 1985-2005 American Indian/ Alaska Native Asian/Pacific Islander Black Hispanic 15K 10K 5K 0K 15K 10K 5K 0K 15K 10K 5K OK: 15K 10K 0K 15K 10K 5K 15K 10K 5K OK-15K 10K 5K 1995

2008. National Science Foundation.

Figures 16.2. Earned bachelor's degrees by race: Selected years,

Women Bachelor's Degree Attainment by Field: 1985-2006 80K Social Sciences 75K 70K svchology 65K 60K 55K 50K 45K Biological Sciences 40K 35K 30k 20k Computer Sciences 10k Mathematics/Statistics 5K Physical Sciences 0 1985 1990 1995 2000 2005 1995 1995 Year Year Field SOURCE: Appendix Table Engineering Biological Sciences Physical Sciences Science and Engineering Indicators Social Sciences

## Why is this indicator important?

Computer Sciences

 Demographic trends and world events contributed to changes in both the numbers and types of students participating in U.S. higher education.

Mathematics/Statistics

## **Key Observations**

Psychology

- The share of bachelor's degrees awarded to women increased in almost all major S&E fields during the past two decades.
- For all racial/ethnic groups (except white), the total number of bachelor's degrees, the number of S&E bachelor's degrees, and the number of bachelor's degrees in most S&E fields, except computer sciences generally increased over the past two decades.
- Women earned more than half of bachelor's degrees in psychology (78%), agricultural sciences (51%), biological sciences (62%), chemistry (52%), and social sciences (54%).

## **Related Discussion**

 Despite considerable progress for underrepresented minority groups between 1985 and 2005 in earning bachelor's degrees in any field, the gap in educational attainment between young minorities and whites continues to be wide.