

23rd on the 'Brainy' List; Boone NC

Written by Steve Frank

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So where are the smart people? Boone ranks 23rd in brainpower, according to a new list from Lumosity that ranks U.S. cities by their raw cognitive performance. Ithaca, N.Y., a relatively small college town, tops the list, according to San Francisco-based Lumosity creator of brain-training exercises, and Boone certainly has comparisons to that. Since it launched back in 2007, Lumosity claims to have amassed the world's largest dataset of human cognitive performance, with data and insights collected from more than 40 million people. The study used data from more than 3 million people in the U.S. between the ages of 18 and 75 who had played several Lumosity brain-training games. These games measured performance across five cognitive areas: memory, processing speed, flexibility, attention, and problem solving. Then the scores were ranked by location. Many of the cities and towns on the list, not surprisingly, are prominent "college towns." Ithaca, N.Y., the top of the list, is home to both Cornell University and Ithaca College. State College, Penn. number two, is home to Penn State. Lafayette, Ind., number three, is home to Purdue University. And Boone, NC, home of Appalachian State, number 23. "One of the most interesting findings from this analysis is that most of the top metro areas contain major research universities, suggesting that education is an important predictor of cognitive performance," Lumosity data scientist Daniel Sternberg said. "Neuroscience research has found that those who are engaged in learning and cognitively stimulating activities throughout the lifetime build up a 'cognitive reserve' that helps maintain and improve cognitive performance." Welcome to brainy Boone, NC.