WHO ARE TODAY’S STUDENTS?
Nationally, today’s students are more diverse than any previous generation of college students: in age, race, and income level. They’re more mobile and may not live on campus. Most participate in the workforce, either full-time or part-time. Work and family responsibilities beyond the classroom—whether that is on-campus or online—often compete with today’s students’ educational goals.

NATIONWIDE, TODAY’S STUDENTS ARE:

37% OLDER THAN 25
64% WORKING WHILE IN COLLEGE
24% PARENTING
13% LIVING ON CAMPUS
40% PART-TIME

First-generation student Jocelyn Salinas wanted to go to college because her parents never had the opportunity. The CollegeTracks program helped her apply for federal student aid, find private scholarships, and prepare her resume.

While financial aid has alleviated much of the stress of paying for college, additional unforeseen costs put Jocelyn at a disadvantage during her freshman year. Jocelyn commutes to school, so when she got in a car accident and couldn’t drive for a month until she saved up the money for repairs, she missed a lot of class and fell behind academically.

To learn more about Jocelyn’s story, visit todaysstudents.higherlearningadvocates.org.
SNAPSHOT: How do Missouri’s numbers stack up?

To better understand how Missouri compares to the national higher education landscape, look to the data below detailing trends in enrollment, federal student aid, tuition and fees, earnings, and attainment comparing national and state level data.

ENROLLMENT

Missouri’s total student enrollment is **387,442**

62% of Missouri students attend full-time.

FEDERAL STUDENT AID

About **65%** of Missouri’s college students and their families take out federal student loans,¹ compared to **70%** nationwide.²

1 Includes Direct Subsidized Loan, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Parent PLUS, Grad PLUS, and Perkins Loan.
2 https://www.cnbc.com/2017/07/03/this-is-the-age-most-americans-pay-off-their-student-loans.html


SNAPSHOT: How do Missouri’s numbers stack up?

TUITION & FEES

Missouri’s institutions of higher education tuition & fees are below the national average.

Source: College Board. Trends in College Pricing 2018. Figure 5 and 6. https://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing

ATTAINMENT

In 2016-2017, about-average rates of Missouri students obtained postsecondary degrees and credentials compared to the rest of the nation.

Note: Certificates only include less than one year and at least one year but less than 4 years.
SNAPSHOT: How do Missouri’s numbers stack up?

## ATTEINMENT continued

As of February 2019,

**43%**

of Missouri residents ages 25-64 have obtained a certificate or postsecondary degree.

NATIONALLY,

**47.6%**

of Americans ages 25-64 have obtained a certificate or postsecondary degree.³

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### Missouri Education Levels for Residents Ages 25-64

- **High School Graduate or less**: 11.5%
- **Certificate**: 19.3%
- **Associate Degree**: 8.8%
- **Bachelor’s Degree**: 37.7%
- **Graduate or Professional Degree**: 3.0%

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### Percentage of Missouri Residents Ages 25-64 with at least an Associate’s Degree by Race

- **Hispanic**: 24% National Average, 26% Missouri
- **White**: 47% National Average, 41% Missouri
- **African-American**: 31% National Average, 26% Missouri
- **American Indian**: 25% National Average, 31% Missouri
- **Asian & Pacific Islander**: 63% National Average, 67% Missouri

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SNAPSHOT: How do Missouri’s numbers stack up?

EARNINGS AND EMPLOYMENT

Americans who earn a postsecondary degree or credential have higher earnings potential.

Source: Georgetown University Center for Education and Workforce. Certificates: Gateway to Gainful Employment and College Degrees. https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/certificates/

Missouri workers with higher levels of postsecondary attainment have more earning power than their peers with less than a bachelor’s degree. The median earnings of Missouri residents is below the national average for residents with some college and/or postsecondary degree.


The majority of jobs nationwide in 2020 will require education beyond high school.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO TODAY’S STUDENTS FACE?

**AFFORDABILITY**
- 49% financially independent
- 31% at or below federal poverty line

**PART-TIME VS.**
- 40% part-time

**COMPLETION**
- 38% of students with additional financial, work, and family obligations leave school in their first year

**WORK**
- 64% work while in college

**PARENTING**
- 24%

**EMERGENCY COSTS**
Early data from the University Innovation Alliance (UIA), a coalition of eleven public research universities, shows that about 4,000 Pell-eligible college seniors, who are in good academic standing, are at risk of being dropped from their classes or not allowed to graduate because less than $1,000 is owed to their institutions.

**VETERAN-STATUS**
- 4% of undergrads are veterans

WORK 

HOW CAN FEDERAL POLICY HELP SET TODAY’S STUDENTS UP FOR SUCCESS?

Outcomes are critical for today’s students—including completion, employment, equity, and value—to be gained from higher learning. Federal policy needs to catch up to the way that today’s students are learning and reward institutions and systems that deliver the strongest career and educational outcomes.

**FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID** should be redesigned with a focus on the needs of a wide range of students, especially those who work full- or part-time, are financially independent, or need to enroll in courses outside the traditional two-semester approach. Redesign approaches could include rethinking Pell eligibility for workforce programs, or simpler loan repayment to match today’s students’ needs.

**DATA** gathered through federal, state, and workforce data systems should cover the full spectrum of today’s students, not just first-time, full-time students. Today’s students, families, schools, and taxpayers need clear information to make informed choices about higher learning.

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4 https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/Completion%20Grants%20release%208_16_17%20FINAL.pdf
5 https://www.luminafoundation.org/todays-student-statistics