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

IN NEW MEXICO,
Dr. Barbara Damron, Former Cabinet Secretary of the New Mexico Higher Education Department and Higher Learning Advocates’ Champions Network member, was initially a public health leader where she focused on amassing data and evidence to inform practice and improve the survival rate among cancer patients and others with life-threatening illnesses. Now, she sees a powerful analogy between health transformation and education and has worked to stress the importance of evidence-based student supports as a tool for improving outcomes.

“Educational opportunity is not only key to getting a good job in today’s economy, but it can also keep individuals out of the criminal justice and public assistance systems, and promote healthier and more prosperous lives for them and their family members. I feel that every day we work in the student success movement, we’re doing work that will save lives.”
SNAPSHOT: How do New Mexico’s numbers stack up?

To better understand how New Mexico 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**

New Mexico’s total student enrollment is **130,636**

50% New Mexico students attend full-time.

**FEDERAL STUDENT AID**

About **45%** of New Mexico’s college students and their families take out federal student loans,¹ compared to **70%** nationwide.²

¹Includes Direct Subsidized Loan, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Parent PLUS, Grad PLUS, and Perkins Loan.
²https://www.cnbc.com/2017/07/03/this-is-the-age-most-americans-pay-off-their-student-loans.html
SNAPSHOT: How do New Mexico’s numbers stack up?

TUITION & FEES

New Mexico’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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Public Two-Year</th>
<th>Public Four-Year (In-state)</th>
<th>Public Four-Year (Out-of-state)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>$3,660</td>
<td>$10,230</td>
<td>$26,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Average</td>
<td>$1,840</td>
<td>$7,130</td>
<td>$20,790</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ATTAINMENT

In 2016-2017, New Mexico students obtained certificates at more than twice the national average, but obtained bachelor’s degrees at far below the national average.

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

ATTAINMENT continued

As of February 2019,

**45.1%**

of New Mexico 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

---

New Mexico Education Levels for Residents Ages 25-64

- **High School Graduate or less**: 10.6%
- **Some college, no credential**: 9.2%
- **Certificate**: 14.7%
- **Associate Degree**: 10.0%
- **Bachelor’s Degree**: 45.1%
- **Graduate or Professional Degree**: 4.0%


---

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

- **Hispanic**: 24% National Average, 24% New Mexico
- **White**: 47% National Average, 50% New Mexico
- **African-American**: 31% National Average, 38% New Mexico
- **American Indian**: 25% National Average, 19% New Mexico
- **Asian & Pacific Islander**: 63% National Average, 60% New Mexico


³http://strongernation.luminafoundation.org/report/2019/#state/NM
SNAPSHOT: How do New Mexico’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/

New Mexico 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 New Mexico residents is below the national average.


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

WHAT CHALLENGES DO TODAY’S STUDENTS FACE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AFFORDABILITY</th>
<th>PART-TIME VS. FULL-TIME</th>
<th>COMPLETION</th>
<th>WORK COMMITMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49% FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT</td>
<td>40% PART-TIME</td>
<td>38% OF STUDENTS with additional financial, work, and family obligations leave school in their first year</td>
<td>64% WORK WHILE IN COLLEGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31% FEDERAL POVERTY LINE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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.

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