

# ALABAMA

## 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



Laura Keane, Chief Policy Officer at uAspire, advocates for closing the college achievement gap.

// To address these attainment gaps we must expand the definition of access. Access is not only opening the doors to begin a postsecondary degree, but also removing the systemic barriers along the way to completion. //

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## SNAPSHOT: How do Alabama's numbers stack up?

To better understand how Alabama 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

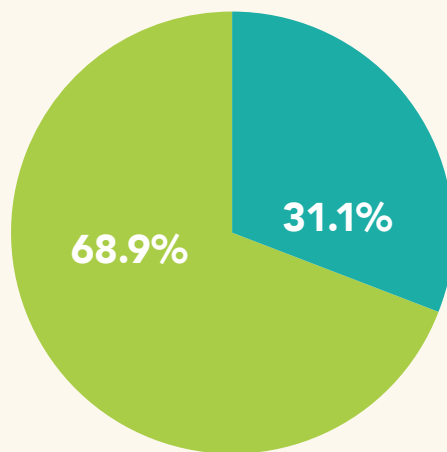
Alabama's total student enrollment is

**308,597**

**69%**

Alabama students attend full-time.

Alabama's Fall Student Enrollment, 2017



- Full-time
- Part-time

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS), Enrollment by Student Level survey, Fall 2017 preliminary data. Includes undergraduate and graduate fall enrollment.

### FEDERAL STUDENT AID

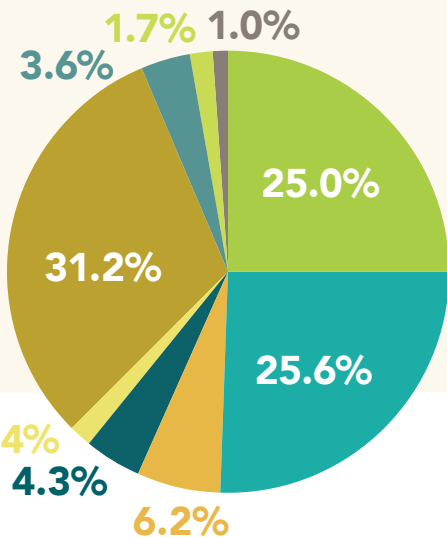
About

**63%**

of Alabama's college students and their families take out federal student loans,<sup>1</sup> compared to

**70%** nationwide.<sup>2</sup>

Alabama Federal Student Aid Portfolio



- Direct Loan Subsidized
- Direct Loan Unsubsidized Undergraduate
- Direct Loan Unsubsidized Graduate
- Parent PLUS
- Grad PLUS
- Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Federal Work Study
- Perkins Loan

Source: Federal Student Aid Data Center. Direct Loan Program. AY 2016-2017 Quarter 4, Award Year Summary. <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/about/data-center/student/title-iv>

Source: Federal Student Aid Data Center. Grant Volume. AY 2016-2017 Quarter 4, Award Summary. <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/about/data-center/student/title-iv>

Source: Federal Student Aid Data Center. Campus-Based Program. AY 2016-2017. <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/about/data-center/student/title-iv>

<sup>1</sup>Includes Direct Subsidized Loan, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Parent PLUS, Grad PLUS, and Perkins Loan.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.cnbc.com/2017/07/03/this-is-the-age-most-americans-pay-off-their-student-loans.html>

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## SNAPSHOT: How do Alabama's numbers stack up?

### TUITION & FEES

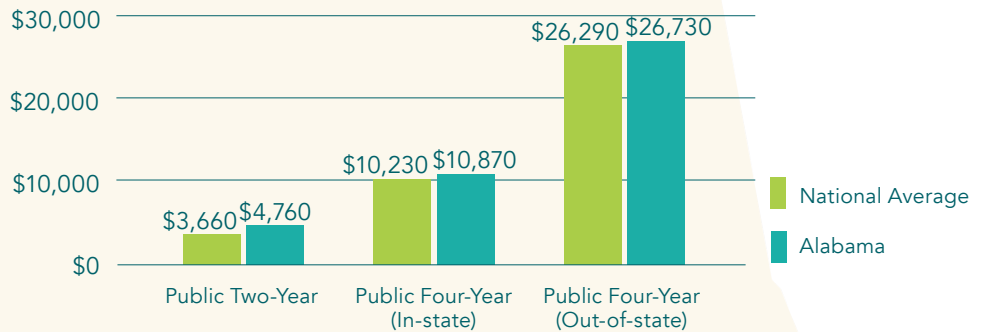
Alabama's institutions of higher education tuition & fees are mainly on par with the national average.

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

Source: College Board. Average Tuition and Fees and Room and Board in Current Dollars, 2017-18 and 2018-19.

<https://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing/figures-tables/average-published-undergraduate-charges-sector-2018-19>

Average Tuition & Fees | 2018-2019



### ATTAINMENT

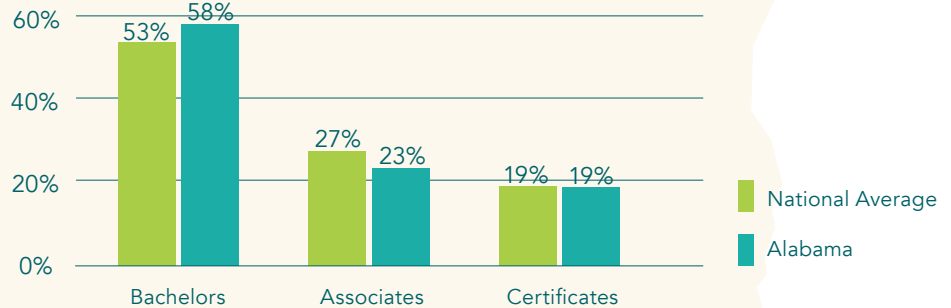
In 2016-2017, above-average rates of Alabama students obtained bachelor's degrees compared to the rest of the nation.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Completions Survey by Gender, 2016-2017 academic year.

Source: Ginder, S.A., Kelly-Reid, J.E., and Mann, F.B. (2018). Postsecondary Institutions and Cost of Attendance in 2017-18; Degrees and Other Awards Conferred, 2016-17; and 12-Month Enrollment, 2016-17: First Look (Provisional Data) (NCES 2018-060rev). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved November 2018 from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2018/2018060REV.pdf>

Note: Certificates only include less than one year and at least one year but less than 4 years.

Percentage of Degrees & Certificates Awarded | 2016-2017



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## SNAPSHOT: How do Alabama's numbers stack up?

### ATTAINMENT *continued*

As of February 2019,

# 40%

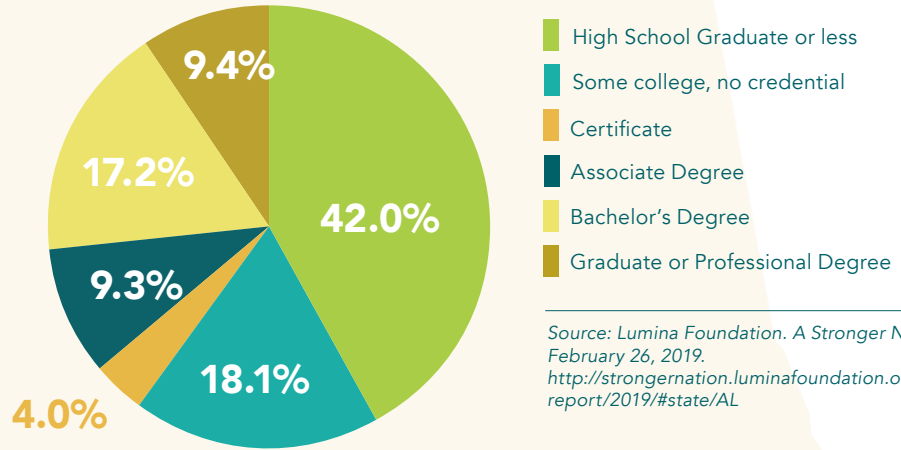
of Alabama residents ages 25-64 have obtained a certificate or postsecondary degree.

NATIONALLY,

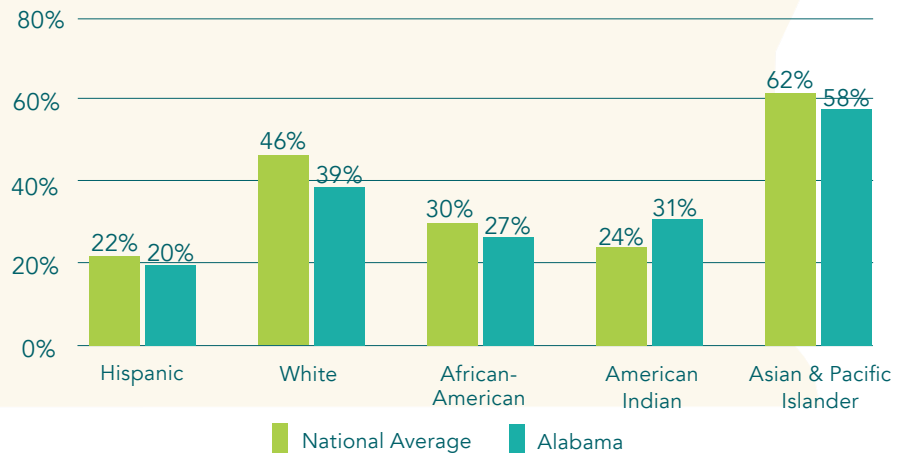
# 47.6%

of Americans ages 25-64 have obtained a certificate or postsecondary degree.<sup>3</sup>

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



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



<sup>3</sup><http://strongernation.luminafoundation.org/report/2019/#state/AL>

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## SNAPSHOT: How do Alabama'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/>

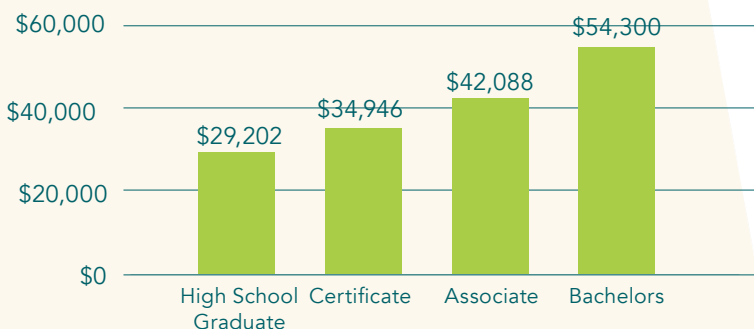
Alabama workers with higher levels of postsecondary attainment have more earning power than their peers with less than a bachelor's degree.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Earnings in the Past 12 Months, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_09\\_5YR\\_S1501&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_09_5YR_S1501&prodType=table)

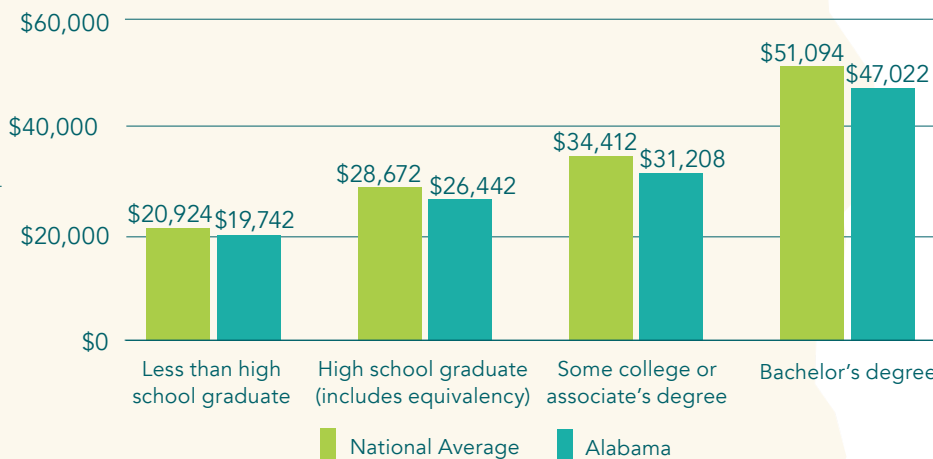
The majority of jobs nationwide in 2020 will require education beyond high school.

Source: Anthony P. Carnevale, Nicole Smith, and Jeff Strohl. Georgetown Center for Education and Workforce. Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements through 2020. June 26, 2013. <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/recovery-job-growth-and-education-requirements-through-2020/>

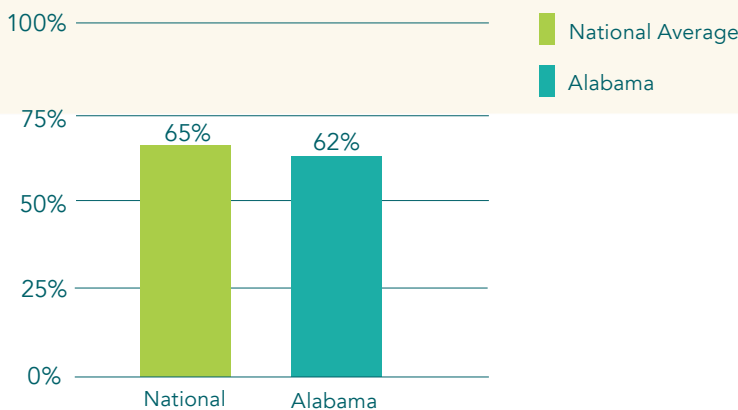
National Average Earnings of U.S. Workers By Educational Attainment



Median Earnings by Educational Attainment for Alabama Residents Aged 25 and Over



Percentage of Jobs that will Require Postsecondary Education by 2020



## WHAT CHALLENGES DO TODAY'S STUDENTS FACE?

### AFFORDABILITY

49%

FINANCIALLY  
INDEPENDENT



31%

FEDERAL  
POVERTY  
LINE

### PART-TIME VS. FULL-TIME

40%

PART-TIME



### COMPLETION

38%

OF STUDENTS



with additional  
financial, work,  
and family  
obligations

leave school in their  
first year<sup>5</sup>

### WORK COMMITMENTS

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**

### VETERAN-STATUS

4%

OF  
UNDERGRADS  
ARE VETERANS



but they face unique challenges, such as applying competencies learned in military service to civilian careers and academics.

## 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.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server\\_files/files/Completion%20Grants%20release%208\\_16\\_17%20FINAL.pdf](https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/Completion%20Grants%20release%208_16_17%20FINAL.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.luminafoundation.org/todays-student-statistics>