



AASCU on the Hill

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AASCU
Delivering America's Promise

#DoublePell: A Proven Investment

No program authorized under the Higher Education Act of 1965 has had the success nor impact of the federal Pell Grant. A proven program that has been the foundation of federal student aid for decades, the Pell Grant opens the doors of higher education and opportunity to low- and moderate-income students with a maximum annual award of \$7,395.¹ Since 1972 over 216 million students have received a Pell Grant.^{2,3}

AASCU joins fellow members of the Double Pell Alliance in calling on Congress to strengthen this proven investment and double the maximum Pell Grant award to \$13,000 by 2029.

#DoublePell: Targeted and Means Tested

In the 2021-2022 school year, **6.1 million students** from all fifty states were aided in their attainment of a higher education according to the U.S. Department of Education.⁴

From its inception in 1972, the Pell Grant Program has always been a targeted and means tested federal benefit based primarily on a student's expected family contribution (EFC) and the cost of attendance (COA). Doubling the maximum Pell Grant to \$13,000 represents a sustainable and long-term investment towards increasing postsecondary access and affordability for current and future students with the greatest financial need. The family income of the 6.4 million 2020-21 recipients were as follows:⁵

- **47%** of Pell Grant awards went to students whose families earn less than \$20,000 annually – *half that number had income less than \$9,000.*
- **40%** of Pell Grant recipients came from families whose annual income fell between \$20,001 and \$50,000.
- **93%** of Pell Grant recipients come from families that earn \$60,000 or less

#DoublePell: Provider of Opportunity

The Pell Grant is especially critical to those Americans who make up the “new majority” of college students: low income, first-generation, person of color, working adult and/or a veteran. For these students, receipt of a double Pell Grant can make the difference between an affordable opportunity and carrying debt when attempting to access a postsecondary education.⁶

- **Nearly 60%** of Black students and roughly **half** of American Indian/Alaska Native and Hispanic students receive a Pell Grant each year.
- Attainment of a college education is possible for **half** of first-generation college students and **52%** student parents because of Pell Grants.
- Almost **40%** of student veterans are Pell Grant recipients.

#DoublePell: Reduces Debt, Fights Inflation

The cost of college tuition and its corresponding debt are widely known as the largest barriers to economic mobility and wealth generation for young Americans. While AASCU institutions strive to be good stewards of taxpayer monies, a drop-off in state/local investment coupled with increased operating costs and decades old infrastructure maintenance have required tuition increases. Doubling the maximum Pell Grant would return some of the grants purchasing power while decreasing student need for burdensome loans, a win for both taxpayers and students.

- Since 1995, overall Pell Grant recipient borrowing has **increased 16%** to cover unmet financial needs, culminating in an average loan amount of \$6,930 in 2015 for public 4-year Pell recipients (13% increase).⁷
- For the average 2019 Pell recipient, only 24% of public 4-year institutions were affordable at the present award amount.⁸
- At its peak in 1975, the maximum Pell Grant **covered 79% of tuition, room and board** for a public 4-year institution; in FY23, a maximum award would only cover 32% of costs.⁹

If Congress were to **#DOUBLEPELL**, it is estimated a maximum Pell Grant would pay for over half of 2029 tuition, room and board at a public 4-year institution.¹⁰

¹ Ma, J., & Pender, M. (2022, October). [Trends in College Pricing and Student Aid 2022](#). Trends in College Pricing 2022 – All Access | College Board. Retrieved March 8, 2023.

² US Department of Education (ED). (2020, July 7). *Federal Pell Grant Program End-of-Year Report and Other Annual Data Reports*. Federal Pell Grant Program Annual Data Reports. Retrieved March 8, 2023, from <https://www2.ed.gov/finaid/prof/resources/data/pell-data.html>

³ U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). [Title IV Program Volume Reports: Grant Programs](#). Federal Student Aid. Retrieved March 7, 2023.

⁴ U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). [Title IV Program Volume Reports: Grant Programs](#). Federal Student Aid. Retrieved March 8, 2023

⁵ U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). [Title IV Program Volume Reports: Award Year Summaries: Pell End-of-Year Reports: Table 002](#). Federal Student Aid. Accessed March 8, 2023.

⁶ U.S. Department of Education. (2018, January). [2015–16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study \(NPSAS:16\)](#). National Center for Education Statistics: Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved March 7, 2023.

⁷ U.S. Department of Education. (2018, January). [2015–16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study \(NPSAS:16\)](#). National Center for Education Statistics: Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved March 7, 2023.

⁸ National College Attainment Network (NCAN). (2022, October 5). [The Growing Gap: Public Higher Education's Declining Affordability for Pell Grant Recipients](#). College Affordability. Retrieved March 7, 2023.

⁹ National College Attainment Network. (2022, October 5). [#DoublePell for College Affordability](#). Double Pell. Retrieved March 9, 2023.

¹⁰ National College Attainment Network. (2022, October 5). [#DoublePell for College Affordability](#). Double Pell. Retrieved March 9, 2023.