

# THE INSTITUTE FOR COLLEGE ACCESS & SUCCESS



## About TICAS

### MISSION:

TICAS advocates for every student, regardless of race, ethnicity, or family wealth, to have access to a quality higher education program without the need to incur debt to realize their dreams of earning a college credential.

### VISION:

To reimagine a national higher education system where students can successfully complete a college credential with confidence that their education will afford them a pathway toward economic mobility and financial sustainability.

## TICAS Area of Expertise



College Affordability



Higher Education Quality & Accountability



College Completion & Success



Anti-Poverty & Student Basic Needs



Racial Equity & Mobility



State Policy & Advocacy

## The State of Higher Education in the U.S.

For decades, the federal government and states have underinvested in students and public institutions. Public colleges enroll more than three-quarters of undergraduate students, including 81% of students of color, yet state support has been declining for decades, and was battered during the Great Recession.

To cover the average cost of attending a four-year public college, students from families making \$30,000 or less **would need to spend nearly all their total income (93%)**.

To cover the cost of a two-year public college, students from families making \$30,000 or less **would need to spend nearly two-thirds of their total income (64%)**.

A college degree remains the strongest pathway to expanded opportunity and financial security, and our higher education system plays a key role in narrowing racial and economic inequities. But enrolling in college has become an increasingly risky proposition for too many students. Today, most students must borrow to cover their costs, and that debt investment may not pay off, especially if they don't complete a degree or if a low-quality program diminishes their post-college prospects.

Many institutions also lack the resources to provide the quality of instruction and holistic supports that we know help students complete a degree; only about 60% of all students who enroll in college graduate within six years. And federal programs that provide basic needs supports to people with low incomes restrict students from accessing critical resources, including food and child care assistance, which can prevent them from achieving self-sufficiency.

These trends are especially harmful for students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, first-generation students, and parenting students: such students are more likely to rely on debt to enroll, less likely to complete a degree, and more likely to default on their student debt, facing devastating consequences that can last for years.

For our higher education system to fulfill its promise, the federal government must provide more student aid, enable colleges to better support their students, perform stronger oversight of colleges, and better support students' basic needs.

## Scan the QR Code for TICAS' Latest Work



## Contact

For questions, please reach out to Chris Lechuga, [clechuga@ticas.org](mailto:clechuga@ticas.org). Thank you!

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