



Increasing Need-Based Aid for Missouri Students via Access Missouri

Missouri students' ability to successfully access college and persist through to degree completion depends largely on their access to financial resources to cover the ever-increasing cost to obtain a postsecondary education. This is especially true for students with financial need. Expanding Access Missouri to assist more Missouri students in successful pursuit of their postsecondary goals is a win for the student, their families and communities, as well as the state of Missouri.

- In order to successfully fulfill workforce needs, Missouri needs more college graduates. By 2018, 60% of jobs in Missouri will require some form of postsecondary education. In 2013, only 37.6% of adults in Missouri had an associate or bachelor's degree.
- Increasing need-based aid will help Missouri on a path to a stronger economy. Recipients of Access Missouri not only attend college, they earn college degrees. An analysis of state scholarship programs discovered that Access Missouri recipients have a stronger persistence rate than Missouri students overall.
- Each year, approximately 50,000 students receive Access Missouri awards, which is significantly more than any other state scholarship program. Over time, Access Missouri awards have decreased; current awards equal the statute minimum of \$1,500 for a 4-year institution and \$300 at a 2-year.
- Funding for Access Missouri is at 69.5 million, much lower than fiscal year 2009 when funding was \$92 million. Since that point the economy has caused greater student need. It is time for Missouri to increase funding to meet student needs.

How can policymakers help?

- Support increases in budget for FY2016 to increase the breadth and depth of Access Missouri.
- Advocate for future increases to keep pace with demand from Missouri students and families.
- Promote need-based scholarship opportunities over merit-based awards, like Bright Flight, which typically benefit students without financial need.

Karissa Anderson
Manager of Advocacy & Policy Research
Karissa@sfstl.org



Tuition Equity for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) Students

Each year, students in Missouri graduate from high school with the intention to enroll in, attend, and graduate from college. For some Missouri students, these dreams are out of reach. In the 2015 legislative session, language was added to the preamble of the higher education budget that states that Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals students are to be charged out-of-state or international tuition rates. Despite having grown up in the United States and attending and graduating from K-12 Missouri schools, **they are being charged the highest rate of tuition at public institutions of higher education.** Based upon data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2008-2012 American Community Survey and the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation, there are approximately 13,000 undocumented immigrant youth in Missouri currently eligible for DACA.

- Many DACA students have achieved a K-12 education and are strong candidates for higher education.
- As DACA students graduate from high school, they have the opportunity to contribute to Missouri's economy. Given Missouri's projected needs for college graduates to meet workforce demands, supporting DACA students through college also supports a strong economy for Missouri.
- Out-of-state or international rates can be double or triple the in-state rate; these rates effectively bar DACA students from attending Missouri public institutions.

How can policymakers help?

- Insure damaging language against DACA students doesn't make it into the higher education budget bill (HB3).

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Manager of Advocacy & Policy Research
Karissa@sfstl.org