

## Higher Education

Georgia ranks 33<sup>rd</sup> in terms of postsecondary participation. In 2014, 51 percent of young adults were enrolled in postsecondary education or had earned a degree, compared to 55 percent nationally.<sup>1</sup>

The average amount of annual in-state tuition and fees at Georgia's public four-year universities increased by more than 31 percent over the last five years (a greater increase than all but one state). But the average amount of tuition and fees, \$8,447, ranks below the national average at 31st.

Net tuition revenue per FTE (tuition after scholarships and other grants) is \$4,468, ranking Georgia 41st highest in the nation.

		Rank
Average Annual In-State Tuition & Fees at Public Two-Year Institutions, 2015-16	\$3,647	31
Average Annual In-State Tuition & Fees at Public Four-Year Institutions, 2015-16	\$8,447	31
Percentage Change in In-State Tuition & Fees at Public Four-Year Institutions, 2010-11 to 2015-16	31.4%	2
Higher Education Appropriations per FTE Student, 2014	\$7,297	14
Public Higher Education Net Tuition Revenue Per FTE, 2014	\$4,468	41
State Grant Aid per Undergraduate Student, 2013-14	\$1,520	2
Total Educational Revenue Per FTE	\$11,757	30

Notes: Net Tuition Revenue is calculated by taking the gross amount of tuition and fees, less state and institutional financial aid, tuition waivers or discounts, and medical student tuition and fees.<sup>1</sup>

College affordability remains a central challenge for higher education. Several financial aid programs are available to Georgia students:

The **HOPE Scholarship** is a merit-based award available to Georgia residents who have demonstrated academic achievement. A HOPE Scholarship recipient must graduate from high school with a minimum 3.0 grade point average and maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative postsecondary grade point average to remain eligible.

The **HOPE Grant** is available to Georgia residents who are pursuing a certificate or diploma. A HOPE Grant recipient must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative postsecondary grade point average to remain eligible.

The **Zell Miller Scholarship** is a merit-based award available to Georgia residents, similar to the HOPE Scholarship, but with more stringent academic requirements and a higher level of tuition assistance. A Zell Miller Scholarship recipient must graduate from high school with a minimum 3.7 grade point average combined with a minimum SAT score of 1,200 on the math and reading portions or a minimum composite ACT score of 26 in single national test administration and maintain a minimum 3.3 cumulative postsecondary grade point average to remain eligible. Eligible students are provided full-tuition assistance while pursuing an undergraduate degree to attend a Zell Miller Scholarship eligible college or university in Georgia.

The **Zell Miller Grant** is a merit-based program available to Georgia residents pursuing a certificate or diploma. A recipient must maintain a minimum 3.5 cumulative postsecondary GPA to remain eligible. Recipients are provided full-standard tuition assistance while enrolled at an eligible college or university in Georgia.

<sup>1</sup> "Quality Counts 2016," Education Week, <http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/qc/2016/shr/16shr.ga.h35.pdf>

*Examples of HOPE's impact on tuition and fees:*

The annual tuition and fees for the University of Georgia for 2015-16 total \$11,622. Students eligible for HOPE receive \$6,990; Zell Miller Scholarship eligible students receive \$9,364. That leaves HOPE students with \$4,632 and Zell Miller students \$2,258 to pay out of pocket. (This does not include room, board, books or other living expenses.)

At Chattahoochee Technical College, the annual tuition and fees for 2015-16 is \$3,216. Students eligible for the HOPE Grant receive \$2,010 and Zell Miller Grant eligible students receive \$2,670. That leaves HOPE Grant students with \$1,206 and Zell Miller Grant students \$546 to pay out of pocket. (This does not include room, board, books or other living expenses.)

High school students can take advantage of college courses at next to no cost with the **Move On When Ready** dual enrollment program<sup>2</sup> or by enrolling in one of the 29 College & Career Academies, which are collaborative education and career-building partnerships between local school systems, technical colleges, and local businesses and industries.

Students eligible for the HOPE or Zell Miller Grant are also eligible for the **Strategic Industries Workforce Development Grant**, which pays for **tuition, books and fees** in the following areas of study: Commercial Truck Driving, Diesel Mechanic, Early Childhood Care/Education, Healthcare Technologies, Information Technology, Practical Nursing, Welding, and Industrial Maintenance.<sup>3</sup>

Low-income students at any higher education institution are eligible for a federal **Pell Grant**. The maximum annual amount of funding for FY 2015-16 was \$5,775, which is enough to cover the out-of-pocket tuition and fee expenses in both scenarios above.

Georgia's **REACH** program<sup>4</sup> provides eligible low-income students in participating school districts with financial scholarships of up to \$10,000 to be used for "the educational costs at an in-state, HOPE-eligible public or private post-secondary institution."

Georgia higher education institutions also have their own need-based programs available, such as the **Tech Promise**<sup>5</sup> program at Georgia Tech, which provides low-income, full-time resident students with funding to cover tuition, mandatory fees, an allowance for books, standard housing, personal expenses and a meal plan.

Georgia State University has gained national recognition for increasing graduation rates dramatically over the last five years with a program of targeted grants and innovative use of data and technology. Over this period, the student population became larger (growing from 27,000 to 32,000), more diverse (moving from 46% to 61% non-white), and more economically disadvantaged (with the Pell population climbing from 30% to 58%). This proves that students from all backgrounds can succeed if the right programs are in place.<sup>6</sup>

All of these aid programs are available *before* students are forced to borrow money through student loans.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://bit.ly/1T3h4h2>

<sup>3</sup> <https://tcsge.edu/freecollege.php>

<sup>4</sup> [https://secure.gacollege411.org/Financial\\_Aid\\_Planning/Scholarships/Grants\\_and\\_Scholarships/REACH\\_Scholarship/REACH\\_Scholarship.aspx](https://secure.gacollege411.org/Financial_Aid_Planning/Scholarships/Grants_and_Scholarships/REACH_Scholarship/REACH_Scholarship.aspx)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.finaid.gatech.edu/promise>

<sup>6</sup> Complete College Georgia report, <http://bit.ly/1SJdVmY>