

A non-profit, non-partisan corporation of public spirited leaders who have joined together to be catalysts for the economic well-being of the Inland Empire region of California – San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

## Invest in Workforce Readiness through Pell Grants

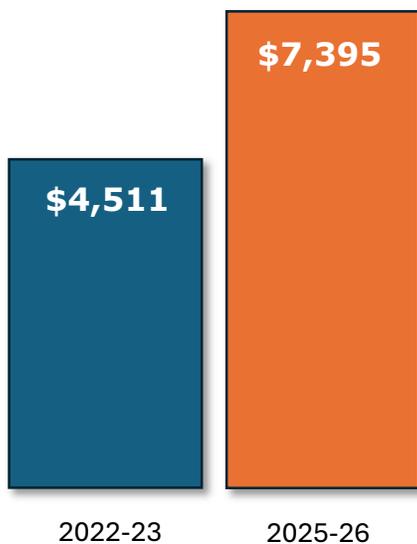
We **THANK YOU** for consistently increasing the Federal Pell Grant Program from 2020-2024 and ask that you support a multi-year commitment to **increase Pell 5% per year for 5 years.**

Pell Grants narrow the achievement gap, boost graduation rates, and often move recipients from **the bottom 20% to the top 20% of income of earners.**

In addition to annual increases in the Pell Grant program, the new “Workforce Pell” (or “Short-Term Pell”) allows students to use funds for short-term (8-15 months) credential programs in high-demand fields such as IT and healthcare.



### Maximum Grant Amounts Under the Federal Pell Program



- Pell Grants serve around 6.5 million low-income undergraduates, narrowing the achievement gap, and boosting graduation rates with recipients often seeing significant income growth.
- They are designed specifically for students with the greatest financial need.
- Pell Grant recipients often move from the bottom 20% to the top 20% of income earners, with many earning more than their parents did within five years of graduation.
- The program increases future tax payments, with the federal government potentially recouping the cost of the grants within 10 years due to higher earnings of recipients.
- Students eligible for the largest grants are 13% more likely to graduate within four years compared to those who are not.
- Despite their importance, the purchasing power of Pell Grants has declined significantly. In the mid-1970s, the maximum grant covered 75% of the cost of attending a four-year public university; today, it covers less than 30%.

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## Median Annual Income by Education Level



## Economic/Workforce Benefits

**Lower Unemployment:** Degree holders consistently face lower unemployment rates. In 2023, the unemployment rate for college graduates was 2.2%, nearly half the 3.9% rate for those with only a high school diploma.

**Recession Protection:** During economic downturns, workers with higher education are less likely to be laid off. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, college graduates maintained much higher employment stability.

**Access to Benefits:** Graduates are more likely to have jobs that offer essential benefits like health insurance, retirement plans, and paid leave.

## Health/Social Benefits

**Health Outcomes:** Education is strongly linked to a longer life and lower risks of chronic diseases. Roughly 60% of bachelor's degree holders rate their health as "excellent" or "very good," compared to 43% of those without higher education.

**Skill Development:** Beyond technical knowledge, postsecondary education cultivates critical thinking, problem-solving and advanced communication skills that are in high demand by employers.

**Civic Engagement:** Educated individuals are more likely to vote, volunteer in their communities, and contribute to national economic growth through innovation.