



THE MONETARY AWARD PROGRAM

mapmatters



FOR OVER 57 YEARS, THE MONETARY AWARD PROGRAM (MAP) HAS HELPED MAKE COLLEGE POSSIBLE FOR MILLIONS OF ILLINOISANS ACROSS THE STATE

MAP recipients come from every legislative district and county in the state. MAP provides need-based aid that a student doesn't have to repay, defraying tuition and fee costs and limiting excessive student loan debt for those who don't have the resources to pay for college.

Historic funding levels. For more than 20 years, the level of MAP funding was unable to keep up with tuition and fee increases, and funding ran out quickly, leaving many eligible low income students without access to this critical grant. Unprecedented increases in the last five years have brought the program's funding to \$701 million in FY24.

Life-changing impact. In FY22 and FY23, for the first time in more than two decades, MAP grants were offered to every eligible student. Bigger grant sizes have improved the purchasing power of MAP and increased the likelihood that a student will enroll, persist, and graduate with less debt.

Achieving state goals. A *Thriving Illinois*, the state's 2021 strategic plan for higher education, noted that with sustained investment over a decade, MAP could be increased to cover 50% of tuition and fees at public institutions. As of FY24, the program is already exceeding that goal: The maximum MAP grant is covering about 60% of average tuition and mandatory fees at a community college and about 51% of average tuition and fees at a public university.

Over the past few years, and especially as a result of the pandemic, the state and the nation saw fewer students applying to college. However, as we are beginning to see increases in college enrollments, MAP funding must keep up to continue to be able to offer all eligible students a grant. The Governor's proposed increase of \$10 million for FY25 will help us continue to make progress in supporting all Illinois students to achieve their postsecondary goals.

MAP Can Make the Difference

¹ *A Stronger Nation: Learning Beyond High School Builds American Talent*, Illinois Report, Lumina Foundation, 2024, <https://www.luminafoundation.org/stronger-nation-report/#/progress/state/IL>

² Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce forecast using data from the US Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS); US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS); US Bureau of Labor Statistics; IHS Markit; Lightcast; and US Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS). <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/projections2031/>

³ See http://pellinstitute.org/downloads/publications-Indicators_of_Higher_Education_Equity_in_the_US_2022_Historical_Trend_Report.pdf (Equity Indicator 1A and 5A)

⁴ *A Stronger Nation: Learning Beyond High School Builds American Talent*, Illinois Report, Lumina Foundation, 2024



“As a self-supporting undergraduate student, the MAP grant helped to decrease my tuition payments and relieve much of my financial burden. The grant helped make it possible for me to attend and graduate from college and helped inspire me to pursue a career helping other students find success through postsecondary education.”

SERENA NICOLE ROBERTSON

- About 57% of Illinois working-age adults (25-64) hold a two- or four-year college degree or high-quality postsecondary certificate.¹ While this is higher than the national rate of 54%, there is still work to do: It is projected that, by 2031, 72% of jobs in the U.S. will require postsecondary education and/or training.²
- College enrollment for students in the top income quartile is 79% nationally, compared to 48% for those in the lowest income quartile.³ While Illinois does better on attainment measures than the overall national rates, there continue to be substantial gaps in postsecondary attainment for adults (age 25-64) in Illinois by race/ethnicity: Asian American and Pacific Islander at 76.1%, White at 55.5%, American Indian or Alaska native at 23.6%, Black at 33.8%, and Hispanic at 27.6%.⁴



“For me, MAP = degree. The Monetary Award Program helped make college possible for me, especially after my only parent lost her job while I was in college. I thought I was going to have to drop out. I wouldn’t be here without MAP.”

MELISSA HAHN

- MAP can make the difference in whether a person can attend college. It’s particularly critical in addressing the attainment gap for low income, first generation students and for students of color:
 - More than half (54%) of MAP-eligible students have family income that is so low that the federal government doesn’t consider them able to contribute any resources to pay for college. In FY23, the mean taxable income for MAP recipients was \$30,708/year.
 - Of the undergraduates at Illinois public universities who identify themselves as Black, 65% receive a MAP grant, and for those who identify as Hispanic, 60% receive a MAP grant.
 - Approximately 58% of MAP recipients are first generation – meaning those who do not have at least one parent who completed college.



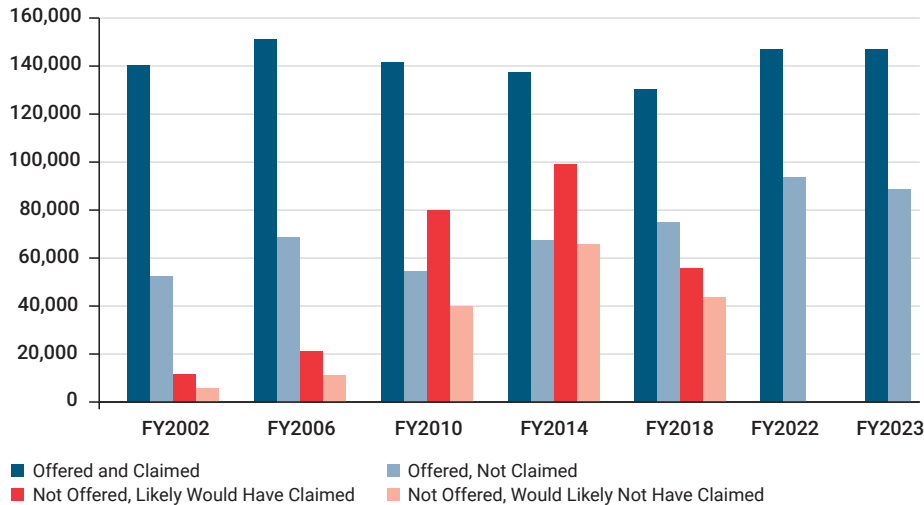
“MAP made it possible for me to attend college. I was the only Latina in the honors program in college. I didn’t see people like me crossing the stage in college or graduate school, and that hit home. I am very grateful for the MAP grant because without it I wouldn’t have been able to afford college, attain my degree, and pursue the career I wanted.”

JASMINE JETTON-GONZALES

Improving MAP Purchasing Power and Meeting Demand

- During the 2022-23 school year, MAP served more than 146,000 students. For the second time in two decades, grants were offered to every eligible student. The maximum MAP grant covered 44% of average tuition and mandatory fees at public universities, and 55% at community colleges in the 2022-23 school year. In the 2023-24 school year, the maximum MAP grant is covering about 60% of average tuition and mandatory fees at a community college and about 51% of average tuition and fees at a public university.⁵

Demand for MAP Exceeded Supply for Two Decades, until FY22



Note: ISAC calculates the number of students who would likely have accepted the award, had they been offered it, based on the previous year's data on awards offered and awards accepted (claimed) by college sector.

- The downward trend in postsecondary enrollment was evident during the pandemic, but it began years earlier. With the significant increase in appropriations and decreased demand, we have been able to provide more awards and increase grant size.
- However, in FY24 (2023-24 school year), for the first time in about a decade, we are seeing an increase in financial aid applications. With more applications, and recent changes in the federal Student Aid Index formula, we are expecting more demand for MAP in FY25. Without additional funding, we likely would not be able to offer a grant to all eligible students, and it is unlikely that we would be able to increase grant sizes to further improve affordability. Improving grant size makes college possible for many students, and also helps students and the state leverage federal Pell dollars. Even with an increase in the size of MAP awards, many students with financial need will need the combination of Federal Pell Grant dollars and MAP to afford college. The combined funding must be enough to make college affordable. With another increase in MAP funding, Illinois can continue to make important strides in improving affordability.

⁵Note that most MAP recipients also receive Federal Pell Grants. Since this combination typically exceeds tuition and mandatory fees at community colleges, it allows more than 98% of Illinois students at or below the median income level – tens of thousands of students each year – to attend college essentially for free.



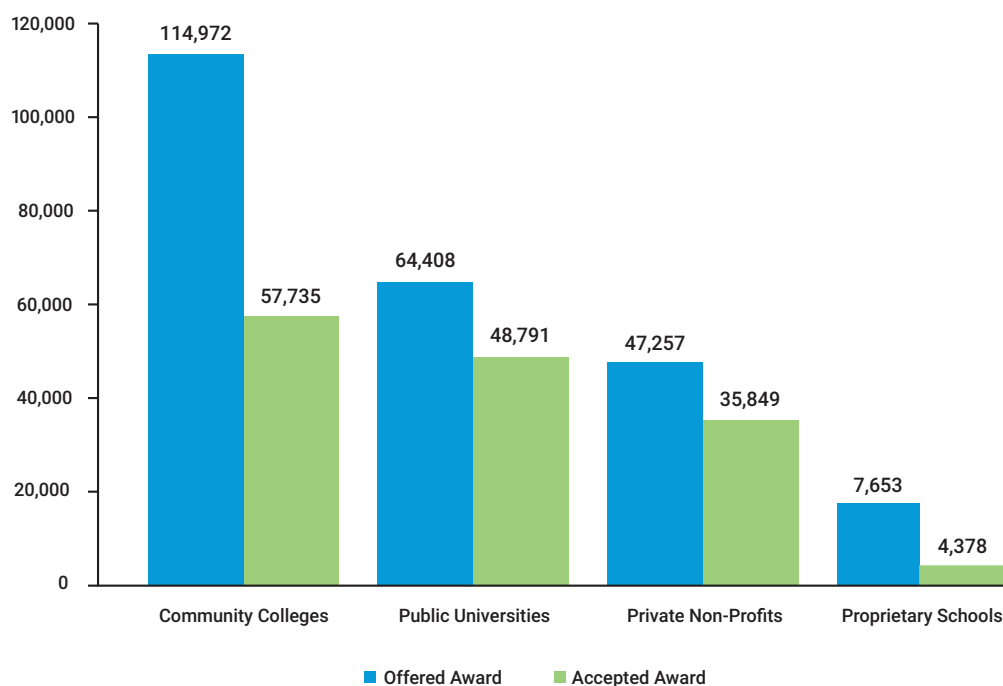
"I would not have been able to graduate from college without the MAP grant. MAP allowed me to focus more on my studies without worrying about how I was going to be able to afford college. The MAP grant was so important to me that I've focused my career on working with counselors and other education professionals to help them help their students reach their postsecondary goals."

MANUEL TALAVERA

More About MAP

- Despite facing significant financial challenges and often being the first in their family to complete college, a majority of MAP recipients graduate at rates similar to all students within their respective institutions.
- A student's eligibility for MAP is determined using information provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) or the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid. Financial need is determined by subtracting a student's family resources from the chosen college's total cost of attendance, and the grant is prorated if a student attends less than full-time.
- MAP recipients are enrolled in all sectors of higher education. In FY23, community college students were offered and accepted the most grants, but the percentage of students who accepted grants is much higher at public universities and private non-profit schools.

FY23 MAP Grants Offered and Accepted by Sector



FY23 MAP Grants, by Sector

	MAP-Eligible Students Offered Awards	% of Awards Offered by Sector	Students Who Accepted MAP Awards	% of Awards Accepted by Sector	% of Students Offered an Award Who Claimed	Total Dollar Amount for Eligible Students	Total Dollar Amount Claimed	% \$ Claims	Sector % of Total Claims	Avg MAP Eligibility	Avg MAP Claim
Community Colleges	114,972	49%	57,735	39%	50%	\$303,850,389	\$84,079,284	28%	14%	\$2,643	\$1,456
Public Universities	64,408	27%	48,791	33%	76%	\$451,316,727	\$281,223,158	62%	47%	\$7,007	\$5,764
Private Non-Profits	47,257	20%	35,849	24%	76%	\$338,433,390	\$212,521,284	63%	36%	\$7,162	\$5,928
Proprietary Schools	7,653	3%	4,378	3%	57%	\$54,489,510	\$18,059,346	33%	3%	\$7,120	\$4,125
Total	234,290	100%	146,753	100%	63%	\$1,448,090,016	\$595,883,072	52%	100%	\$4,900	\$4,060

Dollar amount of award is based on student's estimated financial need, hours enrolled, and cost of attendance at student's selected MAP-eligible school.

Updated March 2024