Beyond Need and Merit: Strengthening State Grant Programs

Tennessee Profile

Why State Grants Matter

State grant programs have the potential to make college possible for many students who could not otherwise afford to enroll. Grant policies vary widely across states in terms of their funding levels, whether they are based on financial or academic criteria or a combination of the two, and which students and institutions are eligible.

Tennessee Residents

22% of Tennessee residents have a B.A. degree
83% of Tennessee students attend an in-state college

$38,686 Median household income in Tennessee (2010)

Colleges in Tennessee – Grants, Funding and Tuition

$330,738,272 in student aid funds disbursed by 8 state grant programs.

Tuition and fees, four-year public colleges, 2009–2010
- TN: $6,098
- U.S. AVG.: $7,050

Avg. state grant aid per student, 2009–2010
- TN: $1,335
- U.S. AVG.: $627

% funding of publics from state/local gov., 2008–2009
- TN: 33%
- U.S. AVG.: 29%

% grant aid based on need, 2009–2010
- TN: 23%
- U.S. AVG.: 73%

Largest Two Grant Programs in Tennessee

(See Appendix B of the full report for a complete listing of grant programs)

HOPE Scholarship
- Funds disbursed: $232,816,811
- % of all state grants: 70%
- Avg. aid per recipient: $3,423
- Eligibility criteria: Academic

Tennessee Student Assistance Award
- Funds disbursed: $44,863,238
- % of all state grants: 14%
- Avg. aid per recipient: $1,823
- Eligibility criteria: Financial