Beyond Need and Merit: Strengthening State Grant Programs

Virginia 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.

Colleges in Virginia – Grants, Funding and Tuition

$235,925,053 in student aid funds disbursed by 10 state grant programs.

% funding of publics from state/local gov, 2008-2009
23% VA   29% U.S. AVG.

Virginia Residents

33% of Virginia residents have a B.A. degree
81% of Virginia students attend an in-state college

$60,363 Median household income in Virginia (2010)

Largest Two Grant Programs in Virginia

VSFAP - Virginia Commonwealth Award
Funds disbursed: $70,658,772
% of all state grants: 30%
Number of recipients: 47,870
Avg. aid per recipient: $1,476
Eligibility criteria: Financial

% of dollars disbursed by sector:
PUBLIC 100%
PRIVATE 0%
FOR-PROFIT 0%

Tuition Assistance Grant Program
Funds disbursed: $57,954,362
% of all state grants: 25%
Number of recipients: 21,482
Avg. aid per recipient: $2,698
Eligibility criteria: Financial

% of dollars disbursed by sector:
PUBLIC 0%
PRIVATE 100%
FOR-PROFIT 0%

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