BY THE NUMBERS

TODAY’S STUDENT

Too many Americans are failing to graduate college. Why? In part, because our assumptions about them are wrong. Most of us envision college students as 18- to 21-year-olds fresh out of high school. That’s no longer the reality.

IDENTITY

37% of college students are 25 or older, and 46% are first-generation college goers.

9% of college students are first-generation immigrants.

42% of college students are students of color.

RESPONSIBILITY

A majority of college students work — many full time — while supporting themselves through school.

49% of college students are financially independent from their parents.

24% of college students have children or other dependents.

64% of college students work, and 40% of them work full time.

6% of college students serve or have served in the U.S. armed forces.

57% of students live independently – away from their parents or campus housing.

To view all sources for data in this document, visit: www.luminafoundation.org/todays-student-citations
Homelessness, food insecurity, and poverty affect college students.

- 36% of college students reported not knowing where their next meal was coming from.
- 31% of college students come from families at or below the Federal Poverty Guideline. The majority of college students (53%) come from families at or below twice the poverty level.
- 9% of college students reported being homeless within the past year.

Economic background dramatically affects success in school and work, especially when race is factored in.

- 1.6x Ninth-graders from high-income families are 1.6x more likely than students from low-income families to pursue an education beyond high school.
- 11% of young adults from low-income families earn bachelor’s degrees by age 24, compared with 58% from high-income families.
- 5x Students from low-income households are 5x more likely to move out of poverty if they earn a college degree.

Most bachelor’s degree holders leave college with loan debt.

- 68% of bachelor’s earners graduate with student loan debt, owing an average of $30,100.
- $25k+ Average student loan debt among bachelor’s holders: $34k (black), $30.1k (white), $25,450 (Latino and Asian-American).
- 5x Tuition has increased 503% more than inflation over the past 35 years.

Graduates with loan debt: 85% (black), 69% (white), 66% (Latino), 45% (Asian-American).

$26.9k+ Average undergraduate student loan debt by institution type: $26.9k (public), $31,450 (nonprofit), $39.9 (for-profit).