**Large University Sample Op Ed**

I am **name**, the president of **college name and location**. Our community and its local economy relies heavily on our university. This includes employment opportunities for residents, community development, and investment in its schools. It is a highly mutualistic relationship. Not to be lost is the talent, workers and future leaders that we bring into **(location)**. **XX%** of our undergraduate student population makes use of the Pell Grant to pay the cost of their tuition. These students are brilliant and inquisitive and eager to make their impact on the world. Without Pell Grants, they may not have been given the opportunity to excel. Pell Grants have proven to be the most effective and equitable investment in college affordability.

Forty years ago, Pell Grants covered more than 75% of the cost of college and today the maximum grant covers less than 30% of that total. Clearly, it is crucial that Congress acts now to increase the Pell Grant amount students can receive. Doubling the Pell from $6,495 to $13,000 will ensure community college is free for all Pell-eligible students and will curtail debt taken on by those students attending four-year colleges and universities. Additional grant aid helps keep low-income students in college and on track to graduation. Doubling Pell will put more money in the hands of students first, and allow them to use it at the college or training program that best fits their educational needs.

If the Pell Grant is doubled, not only will current students receive increased grants, but the pool of students eligible for Pell Grants will grow, providing more working-class students access to aid.

Today, Pell Grants help students in all states and territories, in all corners of the country, whether rural, urban or in between. Students of all backgrounds receive Pell Grants, with nearly 60% of Black students; half of American Indian or American Native Students; nearly half of Latino students; and 30% of White students using Pell Grants to help pay for college.

Thus, expanding the grant will help give more of America’s traditional and adult students access to higher education and will limit their debt so the next generation is able to have greater economic stability once they join the workforce.

Doubling Pell is not only the most effective way to make college affordable and accessible for students, it is also the easiest and most efficient way for Congress to make college possible. It does not require a massive new social program and already has longstanding bipartisan support. There are nearly 7 million Americans who receive Pell Grants each year, hailing from Congressional districts across the country and using the education they receive to better their hometowns and home states. Students in our congressional district receive $XXX in Pell Grant awards and $XXX for the entire state (**See NAICU’s** [**Student Aid Data Sheets**](https://www.naicu.edu/policy-advocacy/federal-student-aid-data-sheets) **for these figures**).

President Biden has committed to doubling the Pell Grant award and Congress should act to do the same, ideally by June of 2022, the program’s 50th anniversary.

To maintain the Pell Grant’s effectiveness it is crucial that Congress supports a doubling of the grant. Furthermore, it must create a mandatory funding stream as well as an automatic increase indexed against the Consumer Price Index. This will ensure that the Pell Grant continues to serve low-income students and families from all backgrounds for years to come.