



**FY
25**

Testimony before House Committee on Health Care Regarding Healthcare Workforce

February 29, 2024

**Scott A. Giles, President and CEO
Vermont Student Assistance Corporation**



#Here4VTStudents

- Administers VT529, Vermont's 529 college savings plan, with 28,315 accounts worth \$595.2 million
- Provides career and education counseling to 7,476 students of all ages
- Provides financial aid and forms nights, both in person and virtually
- Administers the Vermont State Grant program for low-income Vermonters, including the Vermont Emergency Microgrant
- Administers the 802Opportunity Grant
- Administers more than 150 scholarship programs worth \$10 million annually – just for Vermonters
- Provides \$38 million in student and parent loans to help cover the cost of education and training, plus provides comprehensive loan counseling to borrowers

Vermont Advancement Grant

Helping adults advance in Vermont's workforce

Vermonters used their Advancement Grant:

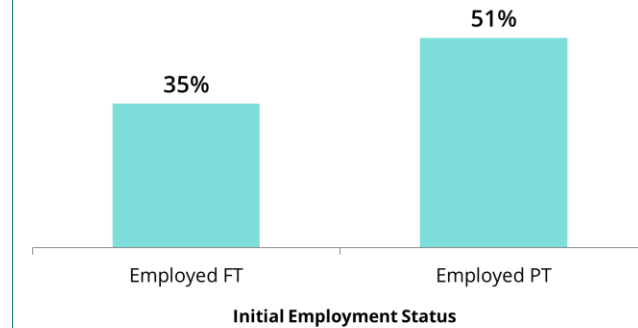
To enter the trades, such as:

- construction workers
- linemen
- cosmetologists
- culinary arts

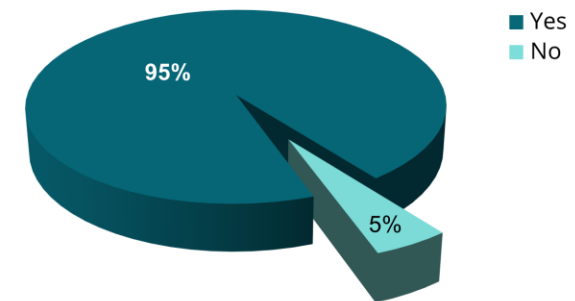
As well as:

- Earn CDL licenses
- Obtain certification as childcare providers
- Enter healthcare professions such as LNAs and dental assistants

Percentage who Reported Increased Earnings after Nondegree Course



Gained Skills that Could Help in Current or Future Job



Vermont Healthcare Workforce Incentive Loan Programs Administered by VSAC

Vermont Nursing Forgivable Loan Incentive Program (3,050,000)

- Program has existed for over 20 years
- Expanded in Fall of 2020 & offered to students in the Spring semester of 2021
- Modified in Spring of 2021 & offered to students in the 21-22 School Year and the 22-23 School Year

Nurse Faculty Forgivable Loan Incentive Program (\$500,000)

- Program was legislated in Spring of 22
- Original Funding Sources was ARPA funds
- DOH and VSAC launched this program for the 2023-2024 AY

Vermont Mental Health Professional Forgivable Loan Incentive Program (\$1,500,000)

- Program was legislated in Spring of 22
- Original Funding Sources was ARPA funds
- DOH and VSAC launched this program for the 2023-2024 AY

Vermont Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Forgivable Loan Incentive Program (\$1,000,000)

- Program was legislated in Spring of 23
- Original Funding Sources was the General Fund
- DOH and VSAC launched this program for the spring '24 semester

Vermont Dental Hygienist Forgivable Loan Incentive Program (\$100,000)

- Program was legislated in Spring of 23
- Original Funding Sources was Global Commitment
- DOH and VSAC launched this program for the spring '24 semester

Vermont State Dentist Forgivable Loan Incentive Program (\$50,000)

- Program has existed for over 15 years
- Funding Source is Global Commitment
- DOH and VSAC partnership

Vermont Nursing Workforce Incentive Loan Program

- Nursing students receive full tuition at a VT Public Institution
- Nursing students receive up to UVM tuition at VT Private Institution or Out-of-State Institutions not to exceed actual tuition
- Awarded students sign a promissory note obligating them to work in Vermont in a nursing position following licensure or to repay the funds received
- Agree to work in Vermont following licensure one year for each year of scholarship receipt
- Awards can be used at any Vermont or Out-of-State Institution which offer nursing degrees

Vermont Nursing Workforce Incentive Loan Program

Eligible Students must:

- Complete FAFSA and State Grant application if appropriate
- Maintain good academic standing
- Can be residents and non-residents
- Attend an eligible nursing program at an in-state or out-of-state school

Priority:

- Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN's)
- Associate Degree in Nursing
- Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing
- Graduate Nursing Education
- Students attending Vermont institutions

Vermont Nursing Workforce Incentive Loan Program Outcomes to Date

Repayment

- 86% of recipients meet work obligation

Usage

Fiscal Year	Number of Recipients
Spring 2021	66
FY '22	88
FY '23	151
FY '24 (to date)	259, unable to fund 67 applicants

Vermont Nursing Workforce Incentive Loan Program

FY '24 to-date

Students may attend an in-state or out-of-state institution with priority given to in-state schools.

FY '24 Institution	Number of Awards
Norwich	34
UVM	48
VTSU	105
Out of State	72
Total	259

Vermont Nursing Workforce Incentive Loan Program

Governor's recommendation:

- \$3,289,000 to support the existing nursing scholarship program administered by VDH in coordination with VSAC—a \$289,000 increase

Impact:

- Increase the number of nursing students committed to working in Vermont

- **VSAC recommendation:**

- \$1 million increase to fund applications that were unfunded.

Technical Recommendations

Align MOU Process with Student Aid Cycle


"Forgivable loans shall be awarded on a rolling basis as long as funds are available, and any funds remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall roll over and shall be available to the Department of Health and the Corporation in the following fiscal year toward additional forgivable loans as set forth in this section."

Eliminate Requirement for FAFSA and Vermont State Grant Application

"Have completed the Program's application and the needed Financial Aid forms as determined by the Corporation, in accordance with the schedule determined by the Corporation."

Research & Evaluation Informing Program & Policy

- [FY22 County Facts](#)
- [Advancement Grant Survey](#)
- [802Opportunity](#)
- [Class of 2012 Report Series](#)
- [COVID-19 Impact on Students' Higher Education Plans](#)



Vermont Student Assistance Corporation

Vermont Advancement Grant Outcomes

Section E.605(e) of the FY 2017 Appropriations Act (H. 875, Act 172) directed VSAC to study the outcomes of its nondegree grant awards, known as Advancement Grants. Advancement grants are need-based grants awarded to Vermont adult students who are trying to improve their employability, whether by gaining specific job skills through a training program or through higher education. VSAC completed studies in 2016 and 2018, and shared findings with the House and Senate Appropriations, Education, Commerce and Finance Committees. The studies showed strong outcomes for the program. In the fall of 2022, VSAC updated that study by collecting background information on the types of nondegree programs funded, the outcomes of those programs, and the numbers and demographics of the Vermonters served. In addition, we also conducted a survey of nondegree grant recipients to collect information on the impact of this grant program on their employment, salary, ongoing college attendance, as well as other aspects of their life such as housing.



VSAC RESEARCH BRIEF | SUMMER 2023

The Vermont High School Class of 2022 Postsecondary Plans

Executive Summary

Every two years VSAC conducts a survey of all high school seniors. This research brief presents findings from the Vermont Class of 2022, the most recent Senior Survey, and compares these data to that from the Classes of 2012 and 2018. This allows comparison of aspiration data from a decade ago as well as a recent class prior to the pandemic.

The purpose of the study was to gather information about seniors' post-high school plans, to determine what proportion of the class planned to pursue further education or training in the fall of 2022 and to consider changes in aspiration over time. Based on our previous research, we examined students' postsecondary aspirations through the lens of two key demographic factors: students' gender and parent educational attainment.

These trend data demonstrate:

- a significant decline overall in students' intentions to pursue additional training or education after high school compared to prior years
- a widening of the gap in aspiration by both gender and parent education attainment since 2018
- a decline in the percentage of students reporting that their parents wished for them to continue their education. This decline differs significantly by gender and parent educational attainment and over time.

Analyses of the data for the Class of 2022 also show the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' perceptions on their learning, and—for at least some students—their postsecondary plans. Lastly, we present findings about students' postsecondary plans, both those who planned to continue their studies immediately after high school and those who planned to enter the workforce.

TOLL FREE
800-642-3177

BURLINGTON AREA
655-9602

ONLINE
vsac.org

EMAIL
info@vsac.org

[f](#) [t](#) [@](#) [in](#)

Vermont Student Assistance Corporation 10 East Allen Street PO Box 2000 Winooski, VT 05404