



FY **20** **Testimony before
House Commerce & Economic
Development**

January 30, 2019

Scott A. Giles, President & CEO

Vermont Student Assistance Corporation



Creating opportunities for all Vermont students, but especially for those —of any age— who believe that the doors to education and training are closed to them.



Vermont State Grant programs

FY18

In the 2017-2018 academic year (FY 2018), VSAC awarded 12,476 need-based education grants to students attending school full- or part-time, or enrolled in nondegree courses of study.

FY18 VSAC Appropriation: \$19,909,088

VT Grant Program	Grant Awards
Full-time	8,028
Part-time	2,768
Nondegree	1,680

Vermont nondegree grant program: a brief history

1982: The Vermont General Assembly creates the first nondegree grant program in the country; applicants needed to be receiving unemployment benefits to receive a grant.

1984: The program is expanded to include under-employed Vermonters, opening up the program to applicants who are working but not receiving a livable wage and to applicants from families receiving state assistance.

2018: More than 38,600 nondegree grants awarded since the inception of the program. The nondegree grant has nearly doubled the numbers of awards over the last decade.



Nondegree grant: purpose

An accredited training program that increases employability

CDL licenses

Certification as childcare providers

Training that gains entry into health professions such as LNA, dental assistants and medical transcription

Training to enter the trades, as construction workers, linemen, etc.

Driver's education programs

For low-income adult students to complete the driver's education they need to acquire a Vermont driver's license. Vermont's lack of widespread public transportation is a significant barrier to employment in most areas of the state of Vermont outside of Chittenden County

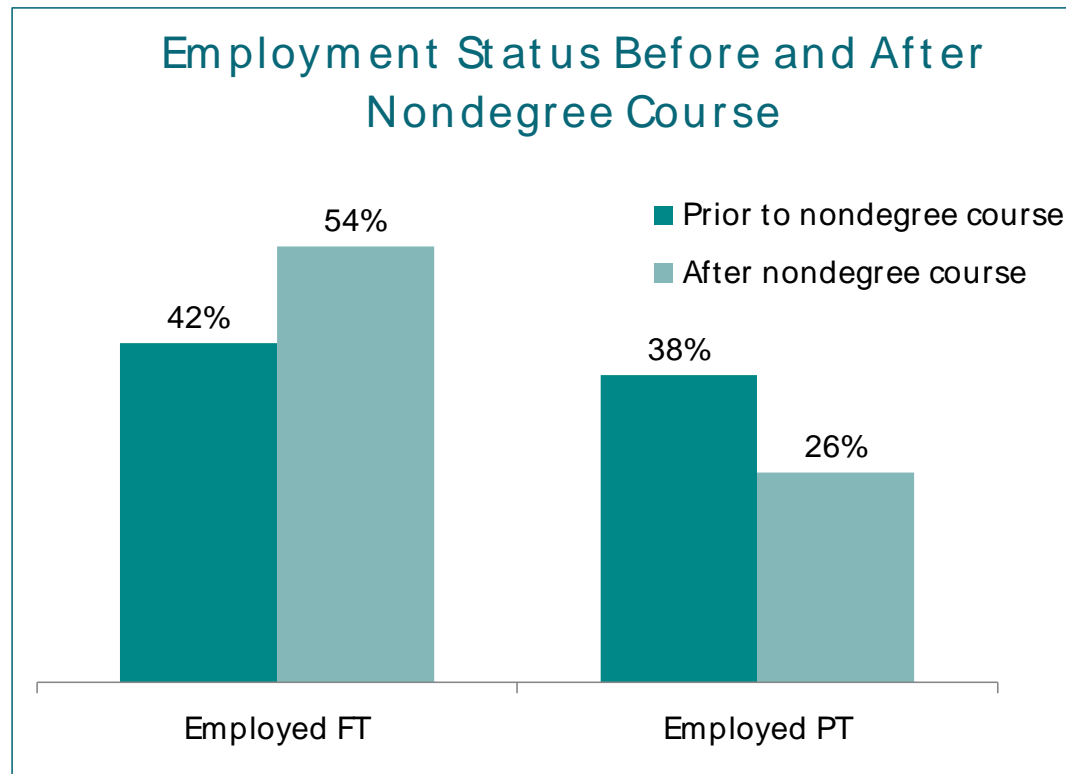
Nondegree courses at colleges and universities

For applicants who are trying to decide if they are capable of successfully tackling college-level work

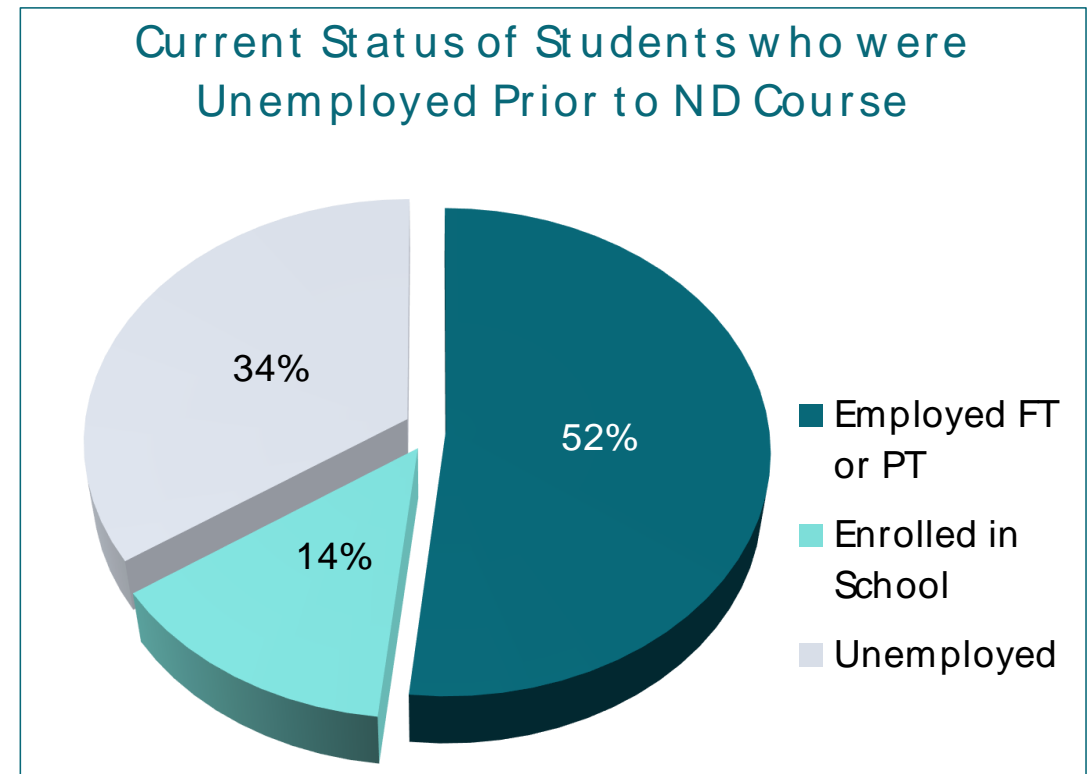
Applicants who have prerequisites that they need to take before they can be admitted to a college

Nondegree grant: changing futures

Full-time employment among recipients increased from 42 percent to 54 percent, a 29 percent increase



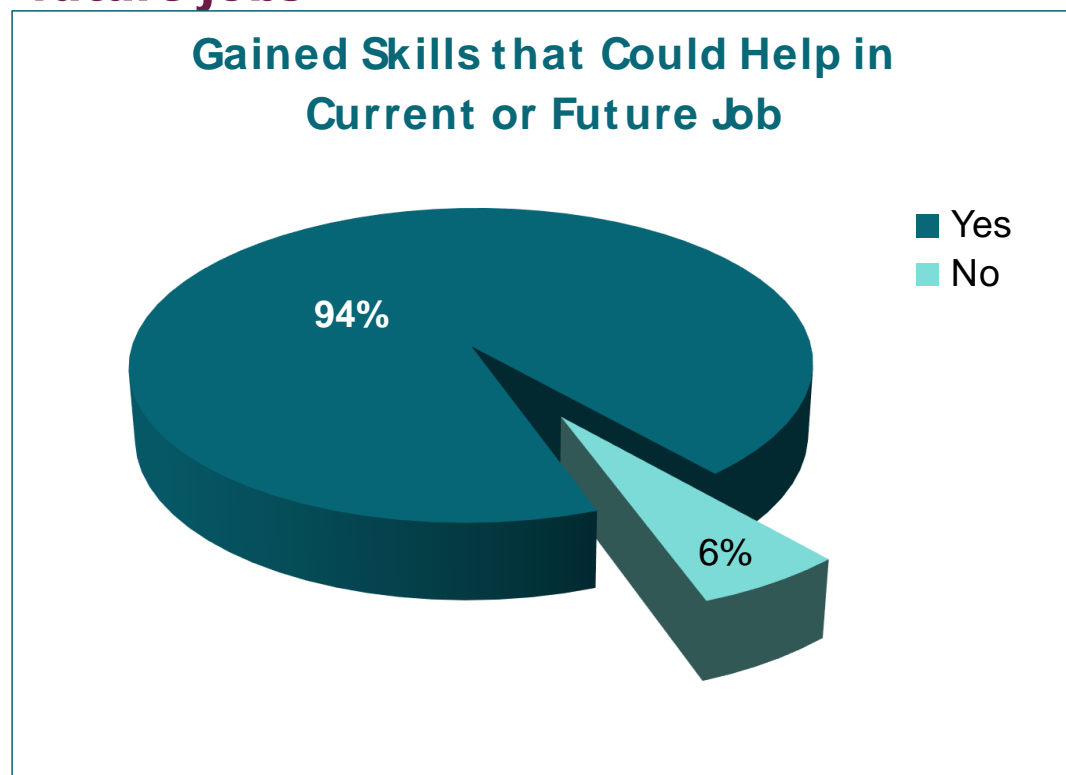
Nearly 7 out of 10 unemployed adult students were working or in school after completing the nondegree course



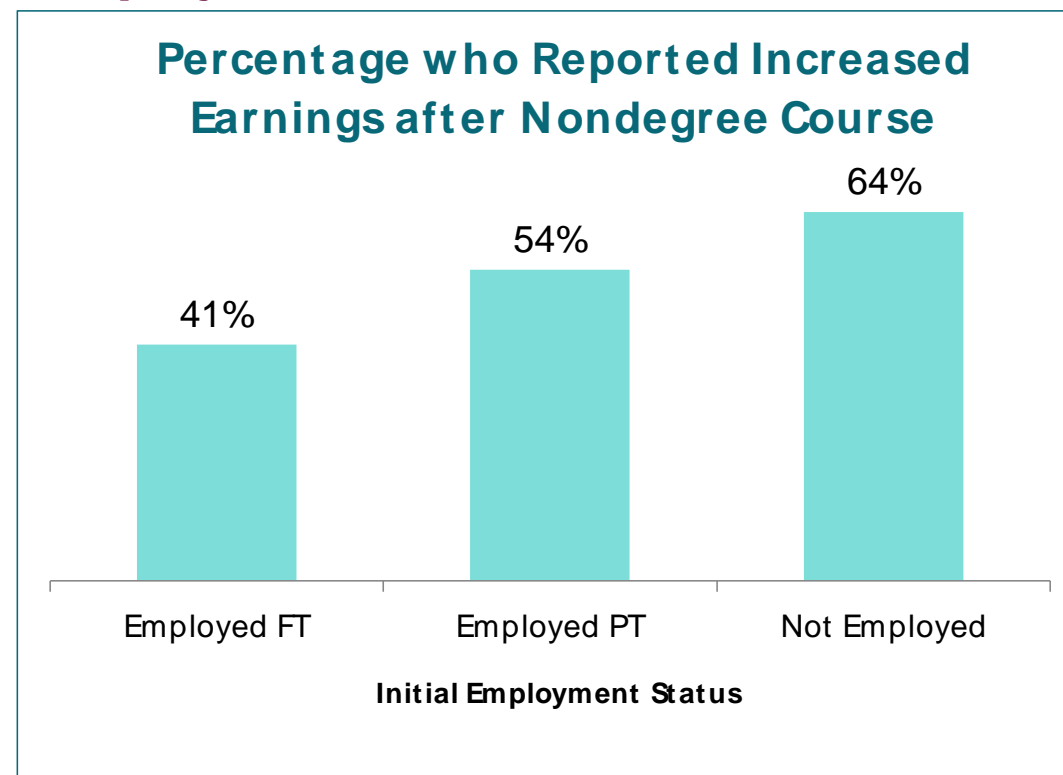
Source: Vermont Nondegree Grant Outcomes Study, 2018

Nondegree grant: changing lives

Overwhelmingly report they gained skills that will help them in their current or future jobs



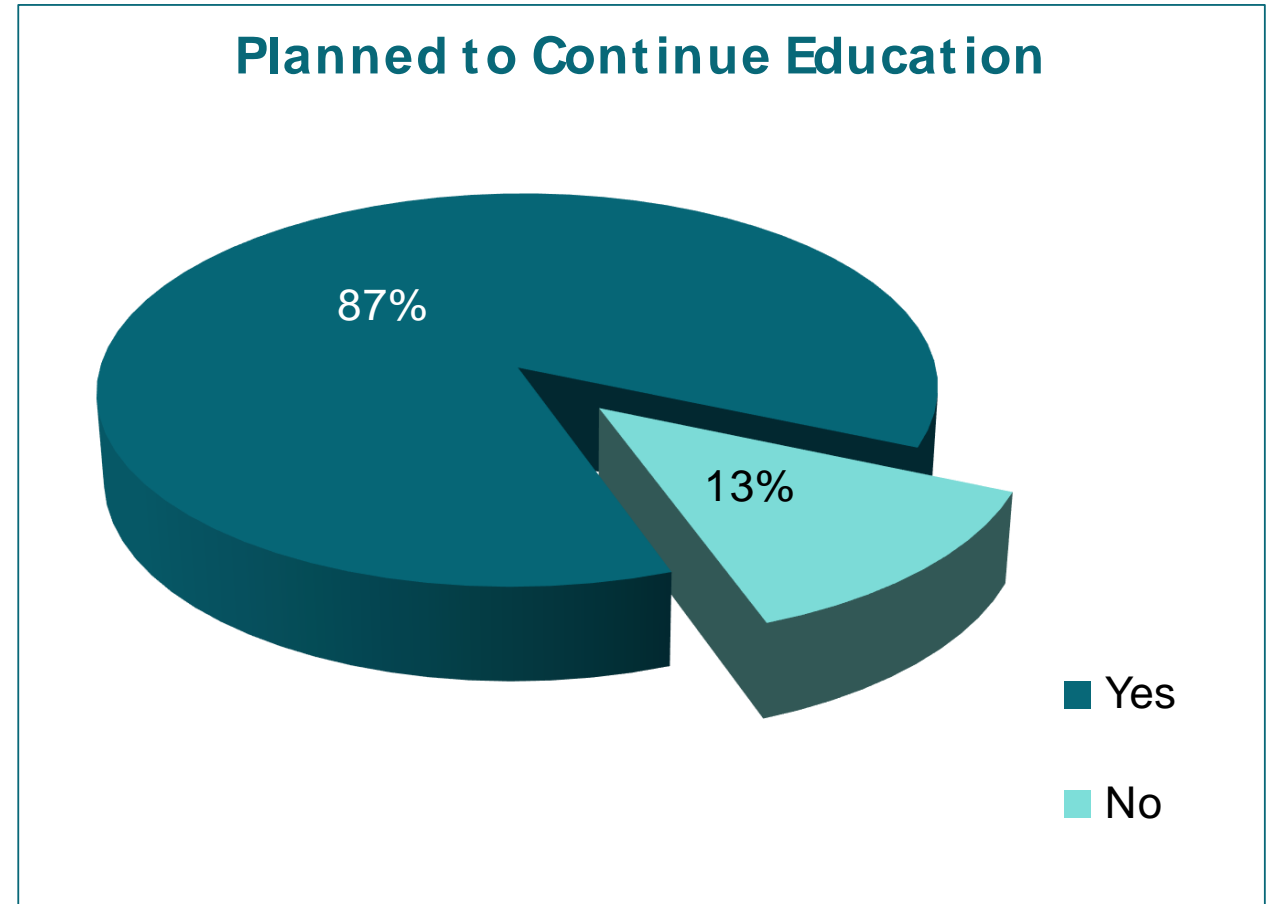
Increased earnings after completing the course, regardless of their initial employment status



Source: Vermont Nondegree Grant Outcomes Study, 2018

Nondegree grant: changing future generations

The vast majority of students who used a nondegree grant to complete a college course found that they were successful taking college-level courses and planned on continuing their education.



VSAC's FY20 request

- Level funding of Base Appropriation for its grant program: \$19,414,588
- \$1 Million to expand the Nondegree program which assists adult learners who seek to improve their education and training
- \$495,000 for the Next Generation Scholarship
- \$200,000 to expand the Aspirations Project, and serve up to four high schools in regions throughout the state.
- Add \$8,000 for dual enrollment stipend for books and travel, for a total of \$80,000.



Appendix A

VSAC Services

VSAC's initiatives

- Advance Vermont
- Scam Relief
- Senior Survey research
- Career & Education Wellness
- FAFSA Completion Initiative
- McClure support DE/EC Pilot
- Expanding "Aspirations" projects



VSAC's student outreach:

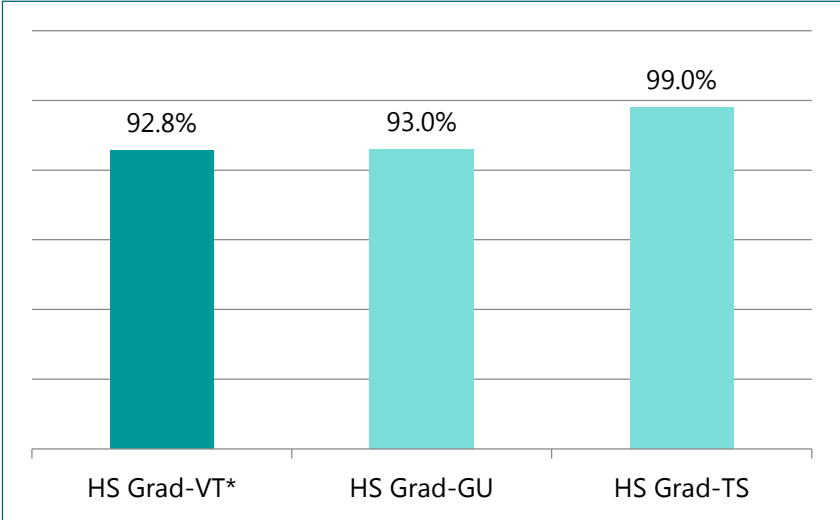
Talent Search & GEAR UP

Serving (AY16-17):

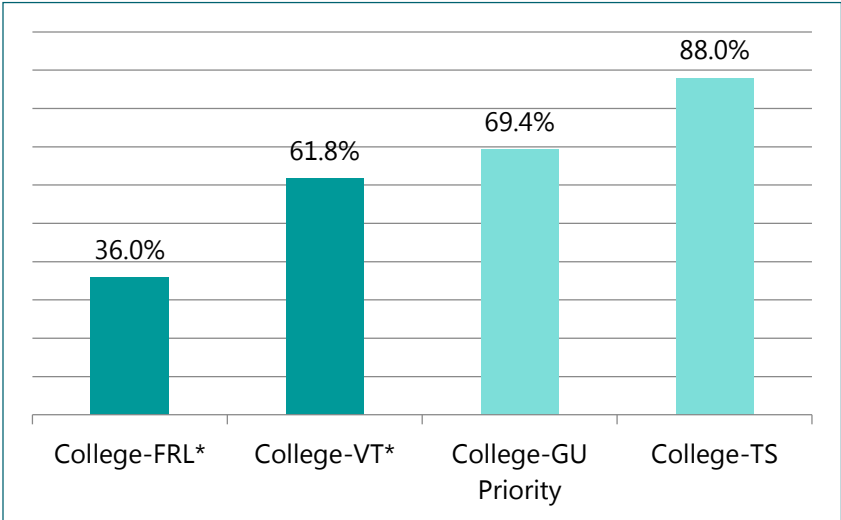
- 96 Vermont schools
- 4,660 middle school and high school students

Demonstrating results:

2017 12th grade Completion Rates



Fall 2017 Enrollment Rates at 2- and 4- yr institutions



Source VSAC Career and Education Outreach
Note: Talent Search (TS) and GEAR UP (GU) are federally-funded grant programs.
. Most recent data available

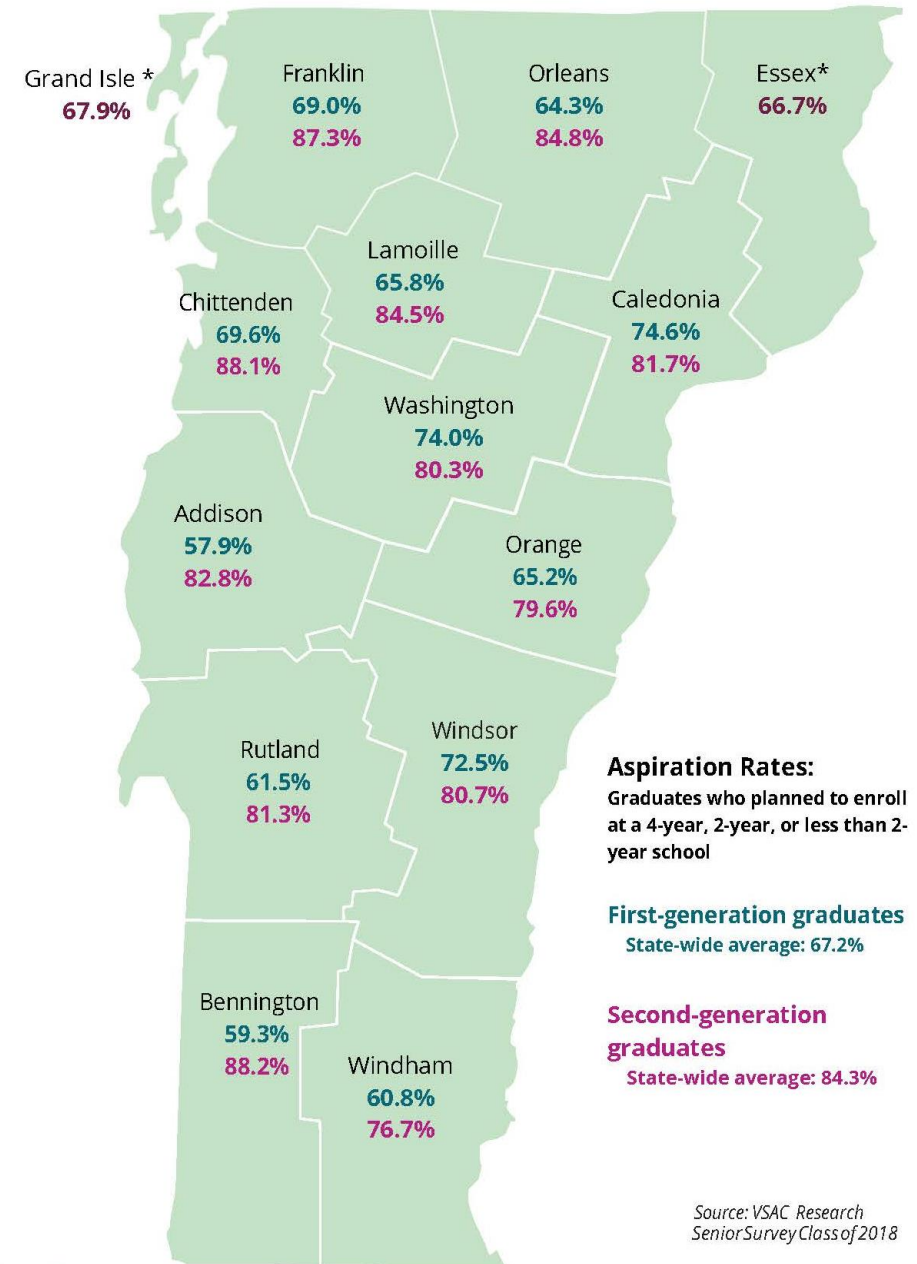
Aspiration initiatives

The Aspiration Project aims to increase postsecondary aspiration and continuation rates.

In FY18, over 2,000 middle and high school students were served by the project at the following schools:

- Bellows Falls Union High School
- Hazen Union High School
- Twinfield Union School
- Spaulding High School
- Central Vermont Career Center

Spaulding and CVCC were added to the program in Fall 2018.



*Small sample size

Source: VSAC Research
Senior Survey Class of 2018

Saving for the future generation

The **Vermont Higher Education Investment Plan** seeks to help families begin to save early and reduce their need for borrowing when the time comes to pursue postsecondary education or training.

It is also one way grandparents can help ensure a lasting legacy.

As of July 30, 2018 VHEIP had nearly 21,000 active accounts and \$372.6 million in assets.

Since its inception, VHEIP families have withdrawn more than \$166.5 million to help more than 6,850 students pay for college.



After college: help is a phone call away

- **Vermont Advantage Loan Coach:** free, in-depth personalized education debt counseling.
- VSAC's **Customer Relations team** works closely with borrowers to help them understand all the repayment options available to them.



"I can't thank you all enough for the help and patience over the years. I still have a loan for my daughter, but VSAC helped my son become a VT State police officer. Nothing but kudos to all of you there!"

~Susan