

Invest in Student Financial Aid: Pell Grant and Federal Work Study

The Federal Pell Grant Program is the largest source of aid available to postsecondary students and is critical to making college affordable and accessible. Currently 26 percent of students at WWU qualify for Pell, meaning the grant is essential to the academic success and attainment goals for thousands of students on our campus. In a time when the composition of federal student aid has largely shifted from grants to loans, the Pell Grant provides stable, consistent need-based aid that students depend upon to attend college and minimize debt. The Federal Work Study program provides financially-needy students with part-time employment opportunities that help pay for their education while gaining valuable work experience, often in the students' field of study. Approximately 240 students at western are employed in a Federal Work Study job.

Proposed Actions:

- Maintain year-round Pell to ensure flexibility.
- Preserve current funding levels for the Federal Work Study program.

Preserve Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

Western Washington University has been, and continues to be, strongly opposed to ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that provides hope and opportunity for more than 800,000 young people across the country, including many Western students, their families and friends. Western stands united with the other universities in the state of Washington, and around the country, in urging Congress and the President to leave DACA in place and make the program permanent.

Proposed Action:

- Pass legislation to ensure individuals with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status are permanently protected from deportation.

Support Research and Workforce Development

Western prides itself on the independent and collaborative research of its faculty and undergraduate student engagement in this research. As a university growing rapidly in STEM fields, WWU increasingly benefits from federal research grant opportunities, including through the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, the National Institutes of Health and other federal agencies that support university research. Examples of WWU research projects funded through federal grants include an NSF grant to research climate change in the Aleutian Islands, an NSF grant to synthesize biologically compatible materials that can be fabricated into devices for biomedical applications, an NIH grant to better understand relapse behavior to food and drug seeking, and a DOE grant to support student tuition and stipends for those completing master's programs in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Proposed Actions:

- Increase funding for research and development to spur innovation, enhance educational opportunities and meet workforce needs.
- Support programs that assist in recruiting traditionally underrepresented populations into STEM fields.