



# Opportunity Scholarship

*Creating a tuition-free college package to ensure college affordability for all New Mexicans*



NEW MEXICO  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT



# Our Promise

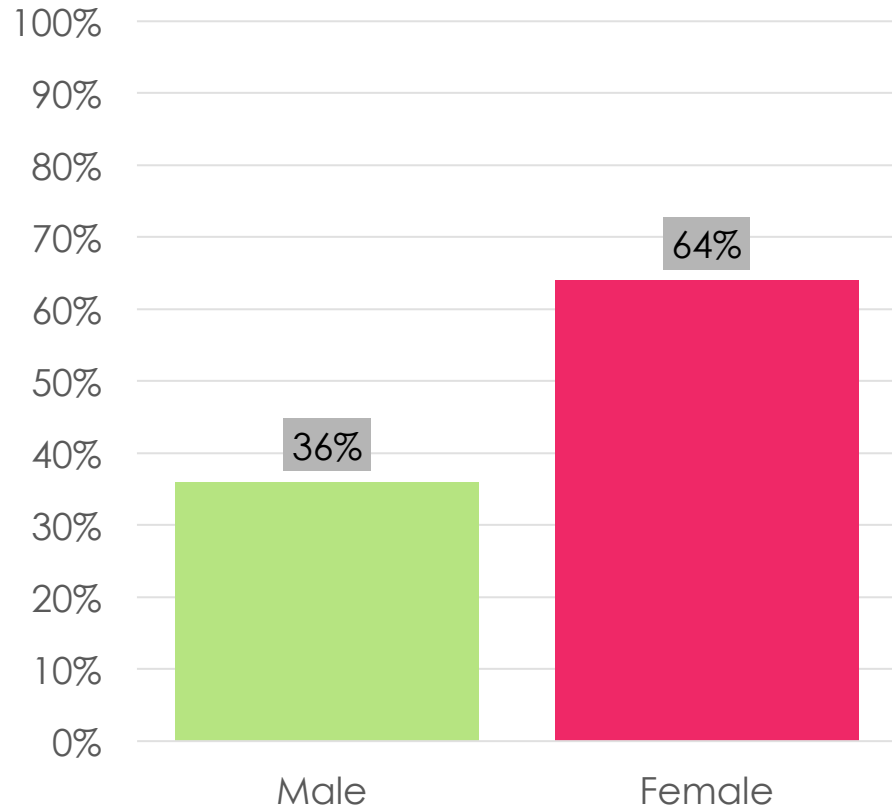
*Fostering spaces for students success in academics and beyond*

The New Mexico Higher Education Department's mission is to provide financial, academic, and policy oversight and support to New Mexico's public higher education institutions and our formal community partners for the purpose of promoting efficiency, accountability, and, most importantly, **student success**.

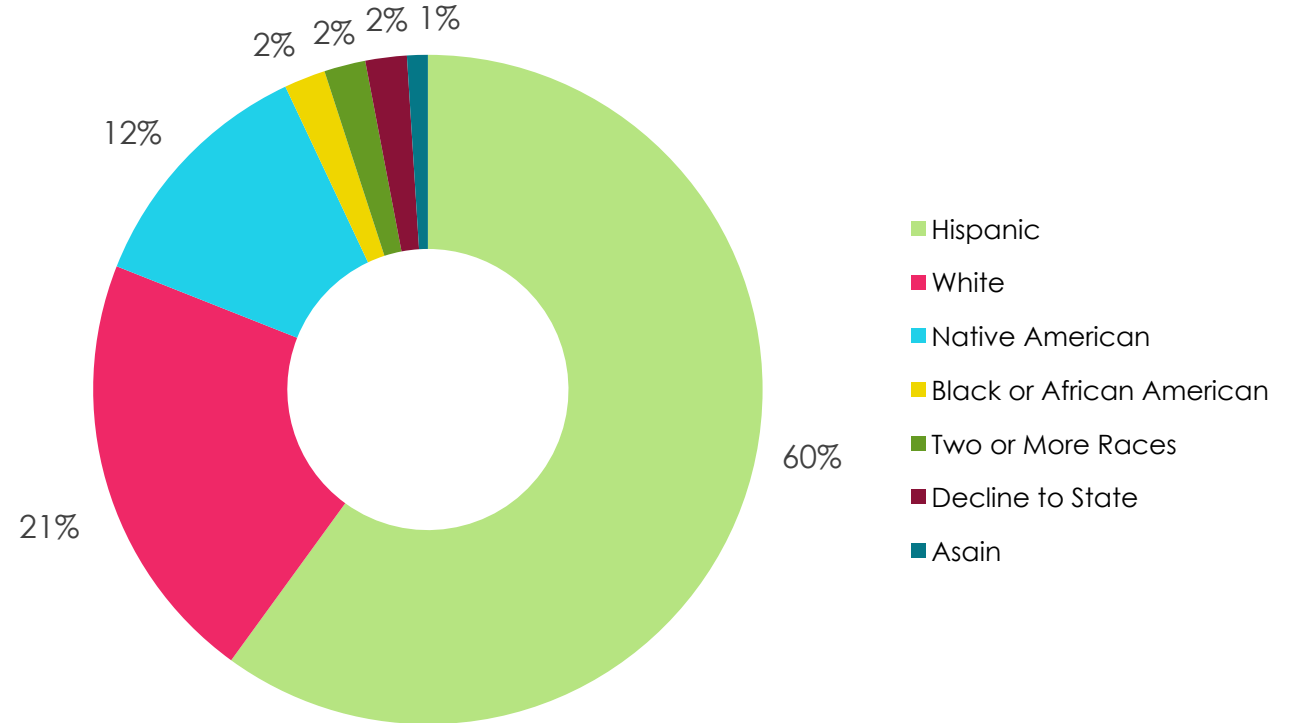
# FY20 Opportunity Scholarship Demographics

Over 10,000 scholarships have been administered in School Year 2019-2020 and School Year 2020-2021.

## Gender



## Race & Ethnicity





In 2019, Gov. Lujan Grisham signed legislation ensuring all students enrolled in public higher education institutions and **Tribal colleges** would be included in the Lottery Scholarship. **This promise extends to the Opportunity Scholarship.**



# Definition of Resident Students

## **21-1-3F. State Educational Institutions; Resident Students**

*All out of state members of an American Indian Nation, Tribe and Pueblo, located wholly or partially in New Mexico, regardless of the residence of the member prior to acceptance at a post-secondary educational institution shall be eligible to pay the in-state tuition rate.*

# Who qualifies for the Opportunity Scholarship?

- An established New Mexico resident
- Must enroll in a minimum of six credit hours
- Maintain a cumulative 2.5 GPA



## Eligibility

*All 29 public higher education institutions and Tribal colleges are eligible to receive funding to distribute Opportunity Scholarships to New Mexico students.*

## What does the Opportunity Scholarship cover?

- Credit-bearing career training certificates as determined by the agency pursuant to the Department of Workforce Solutions Occupational Outlook Database
- Up to one associate degree
- Up to one bachelor's degree



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# Frequently Asked Questions

Please visit **FreeCollegeNM.org** to learn more about the Opportunity Scholarship.

## What about other forms of financial aid such as federal scholarships?

- The Opportunity scholarship is a middle-dollar program. This means that other forms of state aid would be applied first, followed by the Opportunity Scholarship until the total cost of tuition and fees is covered. If a student qualifies for federal aid, such as Pell Grants or the GI Bill, this will be applied above and beyond the cost of tuition and fees so that a student can apply it toward other attendance-related costs such as books, materials, housing, transportation, and child care.

## Can a student stack multiple certificates and degrees with the Opportunity Scholarship?

- The Opportunity Scholarship is stackable. This means that a student can start out on the Opportunity Scholarship pursuing a credit-bearing certificate, then continue to receive the scholarship onward toward an associates degree and finally a bachelor's degree, if they so choose. Another option is stacking multiple credit-bearing certificates to build skills in a particular field, such as automotive technology, aerospace technology, caregiving and healthcare, and more.





# Next Steps

The Higher Education Department is in the process of **rulemaking** and establishing **a memorandum of understanding** with each public higher education institution in New Mexico.



# Questions

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