Robust support for federal student aid is key to strengthening the nation’s skilled workforce, innovative capacity, and economic competitiveness. The federal government has long played a pivotal role in ensuring individuals are able to pursue their postsecondary education goals. That commitment has helped previous generations afford college and attain their educational and career goals. Maintaining this commitment is now even more critical since nearly all new jobs created in our economy require some postsecondary education.

Federal student aid is an essential element in the nation’s economic growth and prosperity, enabling low- and middle-income students to attend college and current workers to retrain for new careers. For FY21, AAU urges Congress to provide increases for other federal student aid programs that provide much-needed grants and work-study to low- and middle-income students, improving their chances of graduating. For FY21, AAU recommends the following:

- At least $1.052 billion for Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants;
- At least $1.467 billion for Federal Work-Study; and
- At least $35 million for the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need program.

AAU urges Congress to support a maximum Pell Grant award of $7,000 in FY21.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates over 7 million students will use Pell Grants in the coming academic year to finance education.