

2015-16 NSHE FINANCIAL AID REPORT



PREPARED BY THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS
AUGUST 2017

Agenda Item VI A-2 (CAHE)
Meeting Date: 03-22-18

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2015-16 NSHE FINANCIAL AID REPORT

Introduction

The mission of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) is to provide higher education services to the citizens of the State. The NSHE Board of Regents and its eight institutions strive to ensure that no student is denied a college education due to an inability to afford the cost of attendance. The cost of attending college is out of reach for many students and families in Nevada, and financial aid plays a critical role in bridging this gap.

A strong financial aid system is an essential component for assuring access to education and ensuring student persistence and graduation. In order to monitor and measure progress in available financial aid programs, NSHE System Administration produces an annual financial aid report. The information provided in this report is critical for monitoring the impact of financial aid on the strategic goals of the Board of Regents, particularly those related to student access and success.

Executive Summary

In 2015-16 total aid disbursed to NSHE students decreased over the prior year for the first time in a decade, from \$606.5 million to \$587.7 million. Systemwide, this represents a 3.1 percent decrease from 2014-15 levels. Conversely, looking over a longer period, between 2011-12 and 2015-16 total aid disbursed to NSHE students saw a 10.8 percent increase. Both the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), as well as Great Basin College (GBC), saw an overall increase between 2015-16 and the prior year, while the remaining four institutions saw a decrease. Just as in past years, in 2015-16 loans comprised the largest proportion (46.9 percent) of aid disbursed at NSHE institutions, but the figure did fall by just over 2 percentage points. Scholarships saw the greatest five-year and one-year increases (36.5 and 14.9 percent, respectively). The only other category to see an increase over the prior year was student employment (6.5 percent), while all categories showed an increase between 2011-12 and 2015-16.

Of growing importance to NSHE students over the last several years, the Regents' Higher Education Opportunity Award (RHEOA) program continued to comprise a greater percentage of Nevada state financial assistance to students than the merit-based Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship (GGMS) program, 44.9 percent versus 33.1 percent. However, the differential between the two programs decreased over the prior year due to changes made to the GGMS program by the Nevada Legislature in 2015 that allowed students to be funded for a maximum of 15 credits per semester (up from 12). Nevertheless, campuses continue to gradually increase their tuition set-aside for financial aid as required by the Board of Regents policy approved in April 2010 mandating a goal for increased allocations to student financial assistance (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 17, Section 1.4). This policy establishes target amounts to be achieved by 2022-23, requiring the distribution of at least 10 percent of the total registration fee to be dedicated to student financial assistance at the community colleges (lower division) and at least 15 percent of the total registration fee to be dedicated to student financial assistance for all other institutions (including upper-division at the community colleges), net the amounts distributed to other fee categories. Of these funds, at least 80 percent of undergraduate dollars must be awarded as need-based, and for graduate students the requirement is at least 50 percent (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 18, Section 8).

As a result of this policy, as well as a commitment by institutions to increase need-based financial assistance to students, the last few award years have seen increases throughout the NSHE, particularly in the fee-generated portion of the RHEOA program. Even with these increases, however, when looking at financial assistance received by NSHE students in 2015-16, the percent of grant aid from federal sources held steady at 76 percent of dollars in the grant category disbursed to NSHE students, which continued to be considerably higher than the national average, which dropped to 34 percent in 2016 from 44 percent in 2011-12. (College Board, *Trends in Student Aid 2016*). This balance may now begin to shift as Governor Brian Sandoval and the 2017 Legislature made the Silver State Opportunity Grant (SSOG) Program permanent and increased funding from \$5 million for the 2015-17 Biennium to \$10 million for the 2017-19 Biennium. However, while the state's contribution to need-based aid grew substantially with the establishment of the SSOG program, the state's average contribution relative to federal aid was small; disbursements to students at all seven NSHE institutions in federal grants (chiefly Pell) totaled \$125.7 million in 2015-16.

As mentioned previously, loans again made up the largest portion (46.9 percent) of financial aid disbursed to NSHE students in 2015-16. This has been a long-term trend, both in Nevada and across the nation. This is because loans continue to be one of the primary options for students to fill gaps in covering the full cost of attendance, and, for some students, loans are the only way to finance higher education. Of course, the drawback to student loans is the debt burden after graduation. Loans are particularly burdensome for those students who do not graduate and therefore carry additional debt without a higher income. On the other hand, there is some good news in terms of borrowing by NSHE students: in 2015-16 total loan disbursements dropped 7.4 percent over the prior year (\$275.4 million versus \$297.5 million in 2014-15). A major contributor to this decrease was CSN, with a drop of 49.1 percent in student loan disbursements, primarily due to the institution's decision to no longer prepackage unsubsidized student loans during the initial awarding process. Three other institutions—NSC, TMCC and WNC—also saw substantial decreases in student loan disbursements.

After a substantial dip between 2013-14 and 2014-15, the number of enrolled NSHE students who filed a FAFSA increased in 2015-16 to 74,397 over 69,168 the prior year. At the same time, the percentage of all NSHE students Systemwide who were funded with at least one form of financial aid increased from 41.6 percent in 2014-15 to 43.8 percent in 2015-16, and 79.5 percent of enrolled applicants received a financial aid award. It can be difficult to pinpoint the exact reason for these fluctuating numbers due to the process of applying for financial aid. Simply filling out the FAFSA is not the only step to receiving financial aid. For many students, institutions are unable to certify eligibility because they have failed to turn in required documents, while others who complete the process are only eligible for student loans and choose not to take them. In addition, there simply are not enough funds to award all qualified applicants, let alone fully cover the documented need of all students.

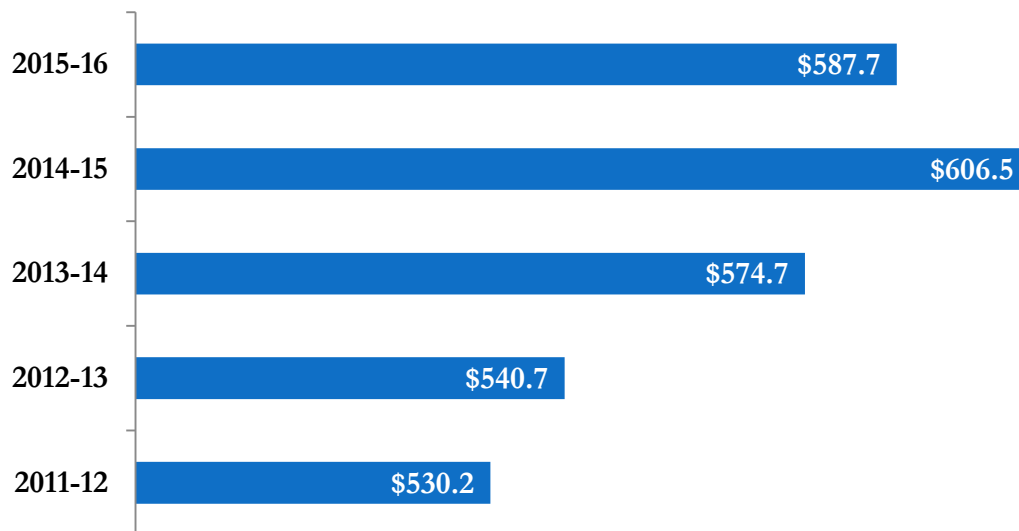
Methodology

The *2015-16 NSHE Financial Aid Report* includes information on the amount of financial assistance provided to students attending institutions within NSHE. The data in this report are provided by the financial aid directors at each NSHE institution. Each fall, institutions submit a detailed expenditure report for each financial aid program administered in the prior year. In addition to that information, trend analyses are conducted on a rolling five-year period. Comparisons to national data are made where appropriate, with source citations.

NSHE Total Financial Aid

For the first time in 10 years, the total amount of financial aid disbursed to NSHE students decreased over the prior year, from \$606.5 million in 2014-15 to \$587.7 million in 2015-16 (3.1 percent; Figure 1). However, looking back over the most recent five-year period, total financial aid disbursements increased by 10.9 percent.

Figure 1 **NSHE Total Financial Aid Disbursed**
(in millions)



The universities and GBC experienced an overall increase in total aid disbursed between 2014-15 and 2015-16. GBC, at 6.0 percent, experienced the greatest one-year increase, and UNR the greatest five-year increase, at 31.2 percent (Table 1). The decreases at NSC and the three other community colleges can be explained by a reduction in Pell Grant disbursements, federal loan disbursements, enrollment or all three. In an effort to combat loan default, campuses have continued proactive procedures to encourage educated, conservative borrowing by students. CSN, in particular, saw a drop of 49.1 percent in student loan disbursements as it discontinued prepackaging of unsubsidized student loans during the initial awarding process.

Table 1 – NSHE Total Aid Disbursed by Institution
(in millions)

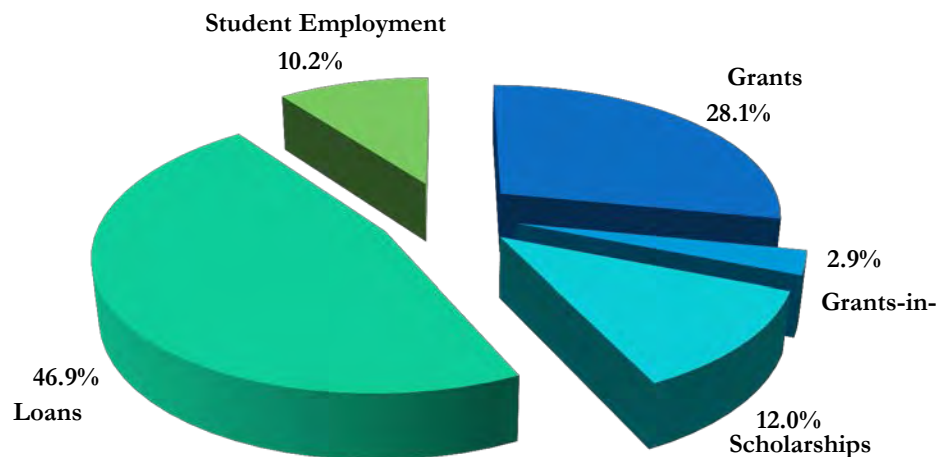
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	1-Year Change	5-Year Change
UNLV	\$231.0	\$237.3	\$240.4	\$248.6	\$256.1	3.0%	10.9%
UNR	\$143.3	\$156.7	\$166.1	\$178.1	\$188.0	5.5%	31.2%
NSC	\$18.1	\$19.6	\$20.2	\$20.6	\$20.5	-0.7%	13.2%
CSN	\$78.8	\$74.9	\$98.9	\$113.7	\$81.8	-28.0%	3.9%
GBC	\$7.6	\$6.8	\$6.4	\$6.0	\$6.4	6.0%	-15.9%
TMCC	\$35.2	\$30.0	\$27.8	\$26.1	\$23.8	-8.6%	-32.3%
WNC	\$16.2	\$15.5	\$14.9	\$13.4	\$11.1	-17.1%	-31.6%
Total	\$530.2	\$540.7	\$574.7	\$606.5	\$587.7	-3.1%	10.8%

Note: Percent calculations are based on actual and not rounded figures and therefore may differ if using the rounded figure only.

NSHE Financial Aid by Category

In 2015-16 the distribution of total aid by category (Figure 2) presented a picture similar to prior years, although loans as a proportion of total aid decreased by just over 2 percentage points while scholarships increased by slightly less than 2 percent. In comparison, for 2014-15 loans comprised 49.0 percent of total; student employment 9.3 percent; grants 28.5 percent; grants-in-aid 3.1 percent; and scholarships 10.1 percent.

Figure 2 NSHE Total Financial Aid Disbursed by Category
2015-16 (percent distribution)



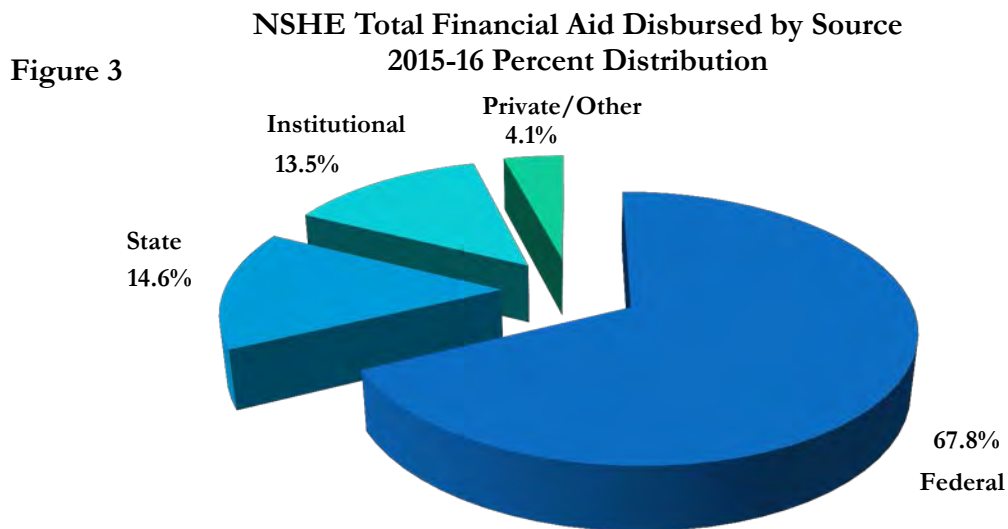
In 2015-16 the greatest increase over the prior year was in the scholarship category, at 14.9 percent (Table 2). Notably, the scholarship category has seen an increase every year for the last five award years; this signals the continued recovery of scholarship programs after a substantial decrease between 2010-11 and 2011-12. The only other category to show an increase over 2014-15 levels was student employment, at 6.5%, although all categories showed substantial increases between 2011-12 and 2015-16.

Table 2 – NSHE Total Financial Aid Disbursed by Category
(in millions)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	1-Year % Change	5-Year % Change
Grants	\$153.4	\$156.1	\$161.1	\$172.7	\$165.2	-4.3%	7.7%
Grants-in-Aid	\$13.4	\$15.4	\$17.9	\$18.9	\$16.8	-10.8	25.3%
Scholarships	\$51.6	\$52.9	\$54.3	\$61.3	\$70.4	14.9%	36.5%
Loans	\$263.1	\$262.9	\$285.5	\$297.5	\$275.4	-7.4%	4.7%
Student Employment	\$48.7	\$53.4	\$55.9	\$56.2	\$59.9	6.5%	23.1%
Total	\$530.2	\$540.7	\$574.7	\$606.5	\$587.7	-3.1%	10.8%

NSHE Financial Aid by Source

The distribution of total aid by source in 2015-16 (Figure 3) shifted somewhat from the distribution in the prior two years, with a decrease of nearly three percentage points in federal aid that was offset by small increases from each of the three other sources. In 2014-15, federal sources accounted for the majority of all aid disbursed to NSHE students, at 70.6 percent; state sources accounted for 12.6 percent; institutional, 12.9 percent; and private/other, 3.9 percent.



When considering NSHE total aid disbursed in 2015-16 by source, the greatest five-year percentage increase came from institutional sources and the greatest one-year percentage increases came from state sources (Table 3). In comparison, in 2014-15 the greatest five-year percentage increase also came from institutional sources (43.3 percent), while the greatest one-year increase came from private/other sources (9.5 percent). The ongoing increase in institutional aid is primarily comprised of scholarship disbursements, while the increase in state sources in 2015-16 can be primarily attributed to growth in Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship disbursements due to program changes enacted by the 2015 Nevada Legislature combined with Year One disbursements from the SSOG program.

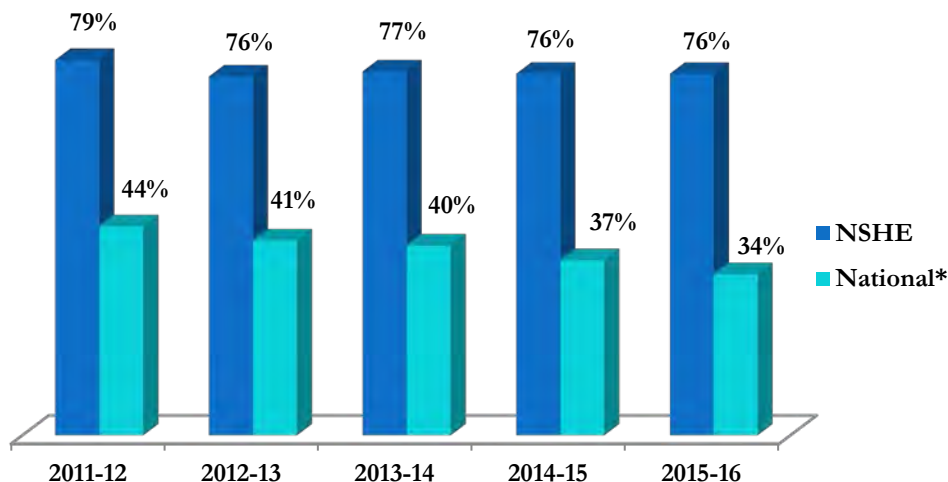
**Table 3 – NSHE Total Financial Aid Disbursed by Source
(in millions)**

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	1-Year % Change	5-Year % Change
Federal	\$386.1	\$379.6	\$405.6	\$428.4	\$398.5	-7.0%	3.2%
State	\$64.8	\$69.0	\$74.6	\$76.2	\$85.7	12.5%	32.2%
Institutional	\$59.1	\$69.6	\$72.8	\$78.2	\$79.4	1.5%	34.4%
Private/Other	\$20.2	\$22.5	\$21.7	\$23.8	\$24.1	1.5%	19.5%
Total	\$530.2	\$540.7	\$574.7	\$606.5	\$587.7	-3.1%	10.8%

Despite the efforts by NSHE to direct a greater portion of student fee revenue to student financial assistance over the last several years, in 2015-16 a majority of grant aid continued to come from federal sources (Figure 4). In the past, the reliance of NSHE students on federal grant aid has largely been attributed to the absence of a state-funded need-based financial aid program. This balance may now begin to shift as Governor Brian Sandoval and the 2017 Legislature made the Silver State Opportunity Grant (SSOG) Program permanent and increased funding from \$5 million for the 2015-17 Biennium to \$10 million for the 2017-19 Biennium. However, due to the size of the federal grant programs—disbursements to students at all seven NSHE institutions in federal grants (chiefly Pell) totaled \$125.7 million in 2015-16—such a shift is expected to be incremental, rather than dramatic.

Percent Grant Aid from Federal Sources

Figure 4



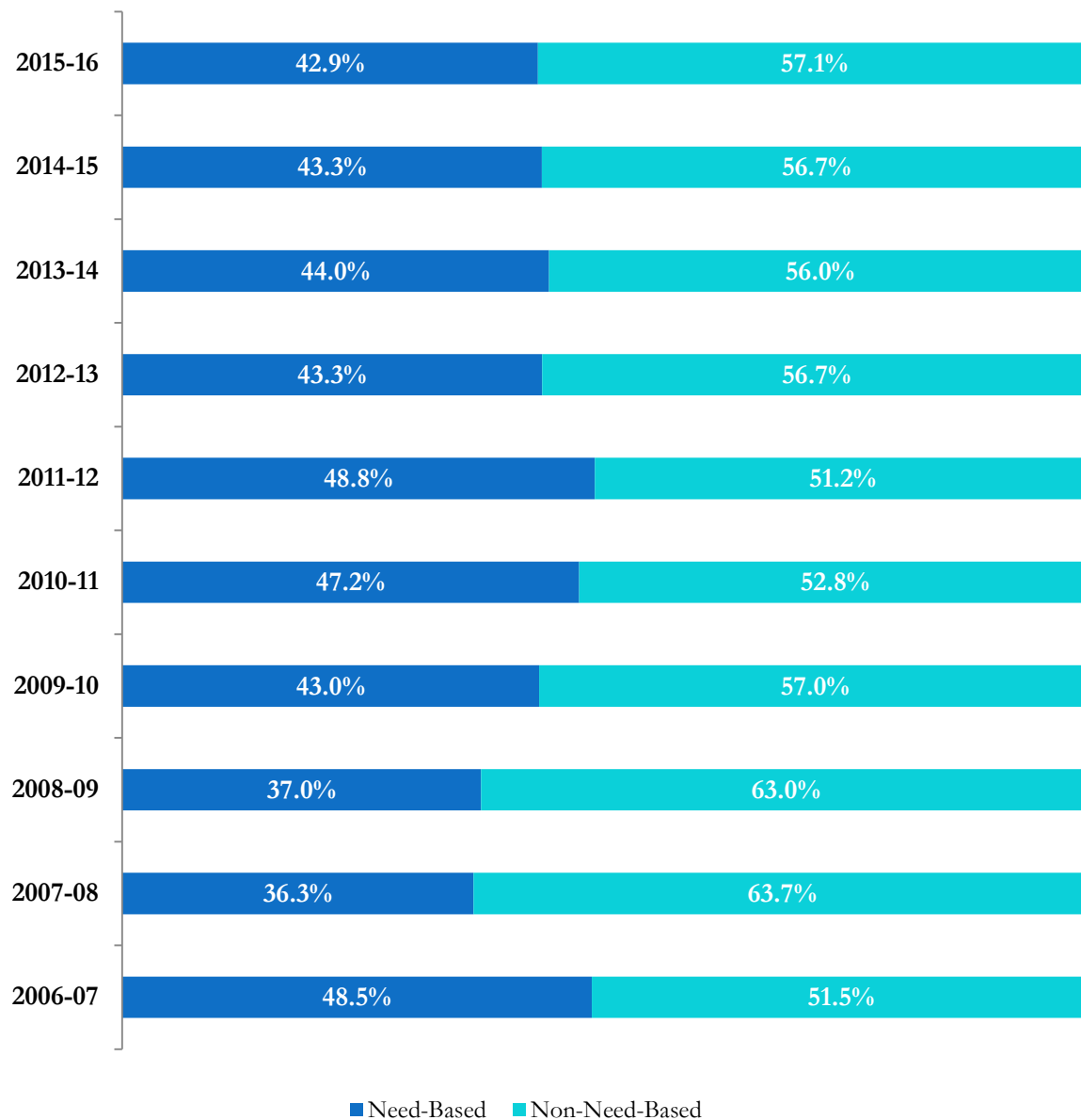
* College Board, *Trends in Student Aid*, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

NSHE Financial Aid by Type

For the last four award years, the proportion of need-based aid versus non-need-based aid awarded to NSHE students has remained fairly consistent. Without a large influx of need-based dollars, it is unlikely the balance will shift dramatically in the future, even with the advent of the Silver State Opportunity Grant Program. This, as noted above, is due to the size of the total existing programs. In 2015-16 total need-based disbursements to NSHE students totaled \$252.2 million and total non-need-based disbursements totaled \$335.5 million (Figure 5; for detailed data, see Appendix A).

Figure 5

NSHE Total Financial Aid Disbursed by Type (percent distribution)



NSHE Pell Grants

By far the largest federal Title IV student grant program, Pell Grant disbursements in 2015-16 accounted for \$28.2 billion in aid to students nationwide (down from \$30.3 billion in 2014-15). When considered in terms of 2015 dollars, nationally total Pell Grant expenditures increased from \$15.5 billion in 2005-06 to a high of \$39.1 billion in 2010-11, but declined by \$10.9 million by 2015-16 (College Board, *Trends in Student Aid 2016*).

NSHE students saw a similar decrease in Pell Grant disbursements between 2011-12 and 2012-13, but an increase in 2013-14 to \$121 million (4.4 percent) and another increase in 2014-15 to \$128.8 million (6.5 percent). However, total NSHE Pell Grant disbursements dropped between 2014-15 and 2015-16 by \$6.3 million to \$122.5 million, a decrease of nearly five percent (Figure 6). For the same period, the number of NSHE recipients dropped by 341 (9 percent; Figure 7).

Figure 6 NSHE Total Pell Grant Disbursements
(in millions)

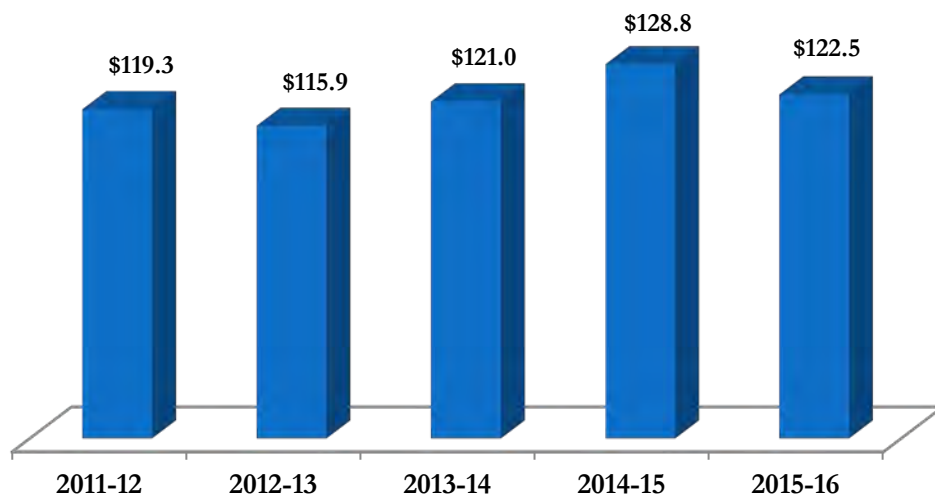
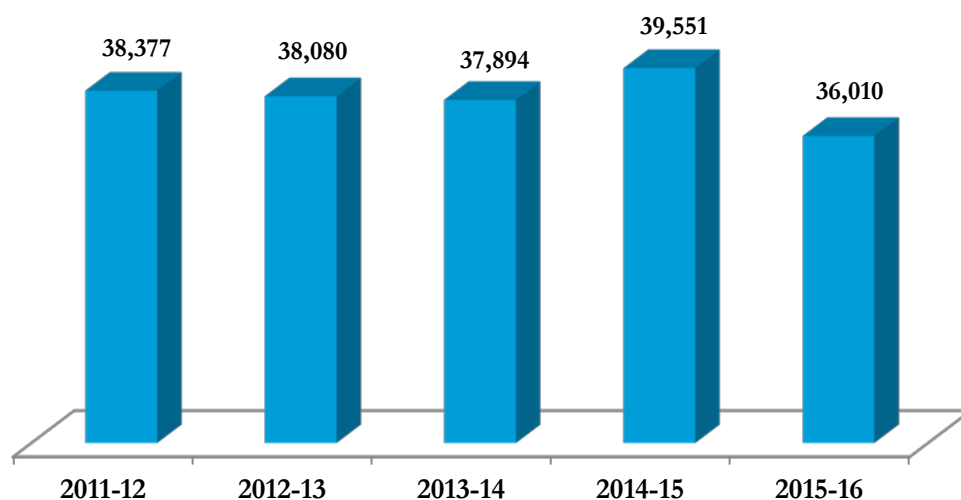
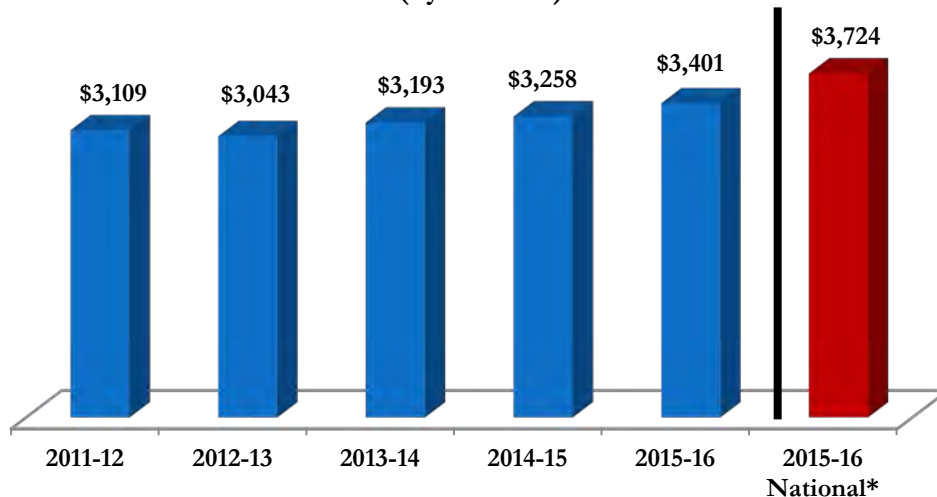


Figure 7 NSHE Total Pell Grant Recipients



Often the Pell Grant is discussed in terms of the maximum award, although the average student award is lower both among NSHE students and nationally (Figure 8). In 2015-16, the maximum annual Pell Grant award increased to \$5,775 from \$5,730 the prior year. In order to be eligible for the maximum award, students must attend full-time (at least 12 credits per semester) and must have a zero Expected Family Contribution (EFC), as calculated by the Federal government and based on student FAFSA data. Having a zero EFC essentially means that the family has no financial resources it can contribute toward the student's Cost of Attendance (COA). Students with a zero EFC who enroll in less than twelve credits receive a prorated award, generally at 75 percent, 50 percent or 25 percent of the maximum. Students who have an EFC greater than 0 may still qualify for Pell, but receive less than the maximum award, even if they attend full-time. It is also important to recognize that during 2015-16 even students with a zero EFC had no Pell dollars available to them in the summer if they received a full time award in both fall and spring. With the reinstatement of summer Pell by Congress effective for the 2017-18 Award Year, this will change as students will essentially be eligible for up to 150% (or three terms) of their calculated Pell Grant award per year. For example, a student with a calculated award of \$5000 enrolled full-time in fall and spring would receive \$2,500 for each semester and still be eligible for up to an additional \$2,500 for summer, if enrolled full-time, or \$1,250 if enrolled half-time (six credits).

Figure 8 **NSHE Average Annual Pell Grant Disbursements
(by Student)**

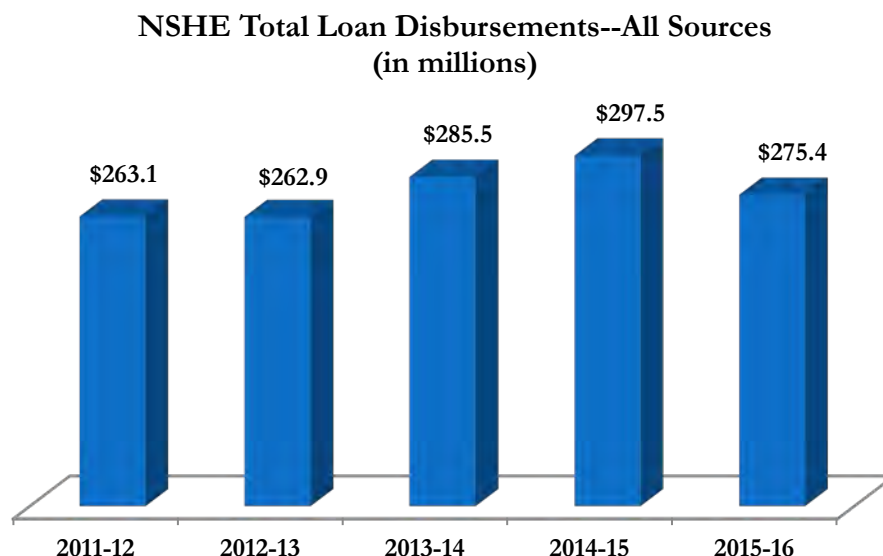


*College Board, *Trends in Student Aid 2016*. Maximum award for 2015-16 was \$5775.

NSHE Student Loans

For NSHE students, total loan disbursements from all sources decreased by 7.4 percent in 2015-16, from \$297.5 million to \$275.4 million, as compared to a 4.2 percent increase between 2013-14 and 2014-15 (Figure 9). A major contributor to this decrease was CSN, with a drop of 49.1 percent in student loan disbursements, primarily due to the institution's decision to no longer prepackage unsubsidized student loans during the initial awarding process. Three other institutions—NSC, TMCC and WNC—also saw substantial decreases in student loan disbursements (Appendix B). Nationally, total disbursements of federal and non-federal loans continued to decrease from a peak of \$124.2 billion in 2010-11 to \$106.8 billion in 2015-16 (expressed in 2015 dollars; College Board, *Trends in Student Aid 2016*).

Figure 9



In 2015-16 four NSHE institutions made available to students long- and/or short-term loans that were institutionally-funded. In accordance with Board of Regents policy (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 10, Section 23), institutions must report annually on such loans. Table 4, below, meets that reporting mandate and provides information regarding NSHE loan disbursements in 2015-16.

Table 4 – NSHE Total Long and Short Term Institutional Loans
2015-16

	Total Outstanding June 30, 2015	Total Outstanding June 30, 2016	Total Awarded	Total Repayments	Total Written Off*	% Written Off
UNLV	\$3,789,533	\$3,479,638	\$377,842	\$535,141	\$152,596	40.4%
UNR	\$6,468,115	\$6,474,386	\$1,534,618	\$1,479,787	\$48,560	3.2%
GBC	\$0	\$0	\$300	\$300	\$0	\$0
TMCC	\$157,978	\$149,185	\$9,400	\$8,362	\$9,831	104.6%
Total	\$10,415,626	\$10,103,209	\$1,922,160	\$2,023,590	\$210,986	11.0%

*Write-off category includes Perkins Loans forgiven under federal regulations. Percentage written off calculated per Board of Regents policy as total written off divided by total awarded for combined loan programs for the year.

Nevada Student Financial Assistance Programs

In 2015-16 there were five System-wide programs that provide financial assistance to NSHE students (Table 5): Regents Higher Education Opportunity Award (RHEOA); Nevada Grants-in-Aid (GIA); Regents Service Program (RSP); Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship (GGMS); and the newly-established Silver State Opportunity Grant (SSOG). RHEOA, commonly referred to as Student Access Aid, has been the largest of the Nevada programs since 2010-11.

**Table 5 – Nevada Program Disbursements
2015-16 (dollars in millions)**

	Students	% Total	Dollars	% Total
Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship (GGMS)	19,502	40.8%	\$30.4	33.1%
Nevada Grants-in-Aid	4,495	9.4%	\$16.8	18.3%
Regents' Higher Education Opportunity Award*	22,359	46.8%	\$41.2	44.9%
Regents' Service Program	361	0.8%	\$0.9	1.0%
Silver State Opportunity Grant (SSOG)	1,064	2.2%	\$2.5	2.7%
Total	47,781	100.0%	\$91.7	100%

*Of total RHEOA awards, 73.4% of dollars were fee-generated, as compared to 73.9% in 2014-15.

Note: student count is duplicated across programs. A student is counted in each category from which an award is received.

During the recently concluded 2017 Session, the Nevada Legislature approved Senate Bill 391 (Chapter 461, *Statutes of Nevada 2017*), which established the Nevada Promise Scholarship Program and budgeted \$3.5 million dollars to be awarded to recent high school graduates who enroll at a community college during 2018-19 and do not have other aid to cover the cost of registration fees. Disbursements from the Nevada Promise Scholarship program will begin to appear in this annual report in 2020 when the 2018-19 report is published.

Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship

Since its inception in 2000, the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship (GGMS) program has been adjusted through increasingly rigorous initial and continuing eligibility requirements in an effort to maintain the longevity of the Millennium Scholarship Trust Fund. These requirements, along with the declining value of the scholarship in the face of registration fee increases, have resulted over time in a reduced percentage of students who activate their scholarships and are able to maintain eligibility. However, it is important to note that students may activate their scholarship at any time within the six-year eligibility window; this means, for example, that the number of activated scholarships for the Class of 2016 will continue to increase until May 31, 2022.

Table 6 – Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship Program Data
Selected Years, 2000-2016

	2000	Class of			
		2010	2012	2014	2016
High School GPA Requirement	3.00	3.25*	3.25*	3.25*	3.25*
NV Public High School Graduates	12,953	20,901	21,833	23,152	24,908
MS Eligible Graduates	7,359	9,124	9,758	10,864	12,717
% Eligible	56.8%	43.7%	44.7%	46.9%	51.1%
Activated Scholarships**	5,657	6,129	6,358	6,754	7,103
% Eligible who Activated	76.9%	67.2%	65.2%	62.2%	55.9%

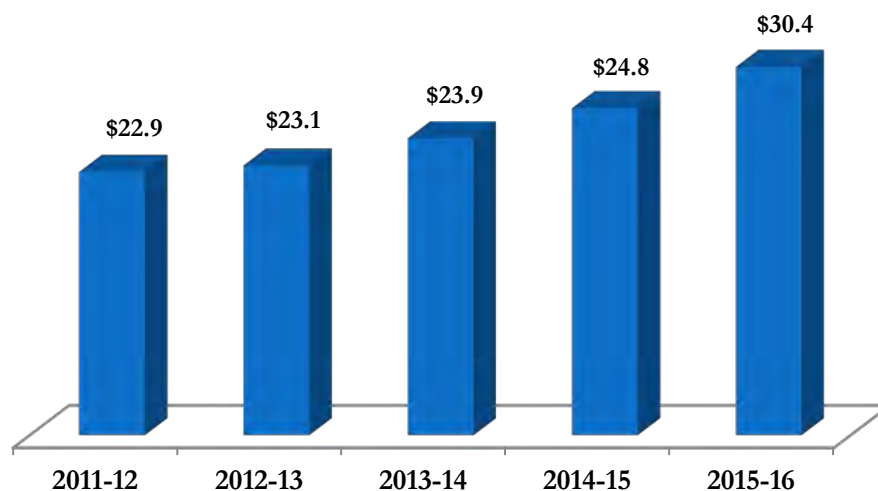
*GPA requirement plus completion of GGMS Core Curriculum.

**Students may activate their scholarship at any time within the six-year eligibility window.

Source: Nevada State Treasurer's Office as of 7/10/17; Nevada Department of Education (Nevada public high school graduates include standard and advanced diplomas).

In 2015-16 GGMS disbursements to NSHE students reached an all-time program high of \$30.4 million, an increase of \$5.6 million (22.5 percent) over the prior year. Because this increase in disbursements was accompanied by a much smaller increase in the number of recipients (368 or 1.9 percent), it can reasonably be attributed to the increase in the maximum number of fundable credits from 12 to 15 enacted by the 2015 Nevada Legislature.

Figure 10
Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship
Total NSHE Disbursements (in millions)



NSHE Regents' Higher Education Opportunity Award

As in prior years, the majority of Regents' Higher Education Opportunity Award (RHEOA) disbursements made to students in 2015-16 were in the form of grants, although some campuses awarded RHEOA-funded scholarships and work study (Table 7). According to Board policy, at least 80 percent of RHEOA disbursements to undergraduates must be need-based. For graduate students the requirements vary: at least 80 percent of state-funded RHEOA disbursements must be need-based, while at least 50 percent of fee-generated RHEOA disbursements must be need-based. See Appendix C for details on how each NSHE institution awards RHEOA funds.

Table 7 – NSHE Total Regents' Higher Education Opportunity Award Disbursements 2015-16

	UNLV	UNR	NSC	CSN	GBC	TMCC	WNC	NSHE
Grants	\$13,417,825	\$12,764,295	\$1,221,217	\$3,933,953	\$411,510	\$1,250,247	\$523,797	\$33,522,844
Scholarships	\$4,043,399	\$1,721,954	\$431,454	\$124,134	\$54,441	\$0	\$0	\$6,375,382
Work Study	\$117,948	\$372,281	\$111,951	\$0	\$15,175	\$499,216	\$160,031	\$1,276,602
Total	\$17,579,172	\$14,858,530	\$1,764,622	\$4,058,087	\$481,126	\$1,749,463	\$683,828	\$41,174,828

Note: of total RHEOA awards, 73.4% of dollars were fee-generated, as compared to 73.9% in 2015-15.

RHEOA disbursements decreased slightly by 1.3 percent over the prior year, from \$41.7 million in 2014-15 to \$41.2 million in 2015-16 (Figure 11). RHEOA dollars come from two sources: state support and a percentage of registration fees, with the majority coming from registration fees. In 2015-16, the proportion of fee-generated aid to state-supported aid in the RHEOA program calculated to 73.4 percent coming from registration fees and 26.6 percent coming from the state-supported budget, while in 2014-15 the breakdown was 73.9 percent from registration fees and 26.1 percent state-supported.

Figure 11 NSHE Total Regents' Higher Education Opportunity Award Disbursements (in millions)



NSHE Regents' Service Program

According to Board policy, institutions must report on the Regents' Service Program (RSP) annually. The RSP was established by the Board of Regents "...so that NSHE students can make a contribution to the critical needs of the community" (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 18, Section 7). Designed primarily as a work program with priority given to literacy and P-16 programs, awards are targeted to students with a high level of skill or knowledge. Table 7 indicates the number of students that participated in the RSP and total dollars disbursed in 2015-16.

**Table 8 – NSHE Total Regents' Service Program Disbursements
2015-16**

	Students	Disbursements
UNLV	75	\$274,662
UNR	59	\$217,548
NSC	0	\$0.00
CSN	182	\$208,996
GBC	11	\$29,862
TMCC	25	\$94,343
WNC	9	\$52,320
Total	361	\$877,731

Silver State Opportunity Grant Program

The Silver State Opportunity Grant (SSOG) is a state-supported financial aid program created by the 2015 Legislature pursuant to Senate Bill 227 (Chapter 387, *Statutes of Nevada 2015*). Under the SSOG Program, need-based grants are awarded to eligible low-income students who are college-ready to pay for a portion of the cost of education at a community college or state college within the NSHE. This unique program is built on a shared responsibility model and guided by a philosophy for awarding grant aid based on the total cost of attendance (tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, and other living expenses) being shared by partners (the state, the federal government, the family, and the student). Simply stated, the program is designed to ensure low income students have both the incentive and the financial resources to enroll in 15 credits per semester and graduate on time as do their more affluent peers.

SSOG Awards were initially made during Academic Year 2015-16. The 2015 Legislature appropriated the sum of \$2.5 million for Fiscal Year 2015-16 and \$2.5 million for Fiscal Year 2016-17 to support the program under Senate Bill 514 (Chapter 534, *Statutes of Nevada 2015*). Available funding was insufficient to award all eligible students in Year One of the program (Table 9). However, during the 2017 Legislative Session the SSOG program became part of the approved Executive Budget, with an appropriation doubling that of the prior biennium: \$5 million for Fiscal Year 2017-18 and \$5 million for Fiscal Year 2018-19. It is expected at this level of funding that all SSOG-eligible students will be awarded, although there is a possibility that with changing student behavior the demand for SSOG funding will grow beyond estimates based on student data from Year One.

**Table 9 – Silver State Opportunity Grant
Disbursements and Eligible Students, 2015-16**

	Total Dollars Awarded	Eligible Students Awarded*	Eligible Students Not Awarded	% of Eligible Students Awarded
NSC	\$365,103	121	171	41.4%
CSN	\$1,368,414	655	335	66.2%
GBC	\$176,842	51	64	44.3%
TMCC	\$352,007	142	192	42.5%
WNC	\$237,634	95	87	52.2%
Total	\$2,500,000	1064	849	55.6%

**Unduplicated count by institution is 1,064. Unduplicated count NSHE-wide is 1063 (one student started at an eligible institution in fall and transferred to another in spring).

Since SSOG is the State of Nevada's first state-supported need-based financial aid program and recipients are required to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), it is the first program where income information is available for all recipients. Data collected from the campuses for reporting to the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs (NASSGAP) demonstrate that, as intended, the program is indeed reaching some of the neediest students attending NSHE institutions (Table 10).

**Table 10 – Silver State Opportunity Grant Recipients by Income Level
2015-16**

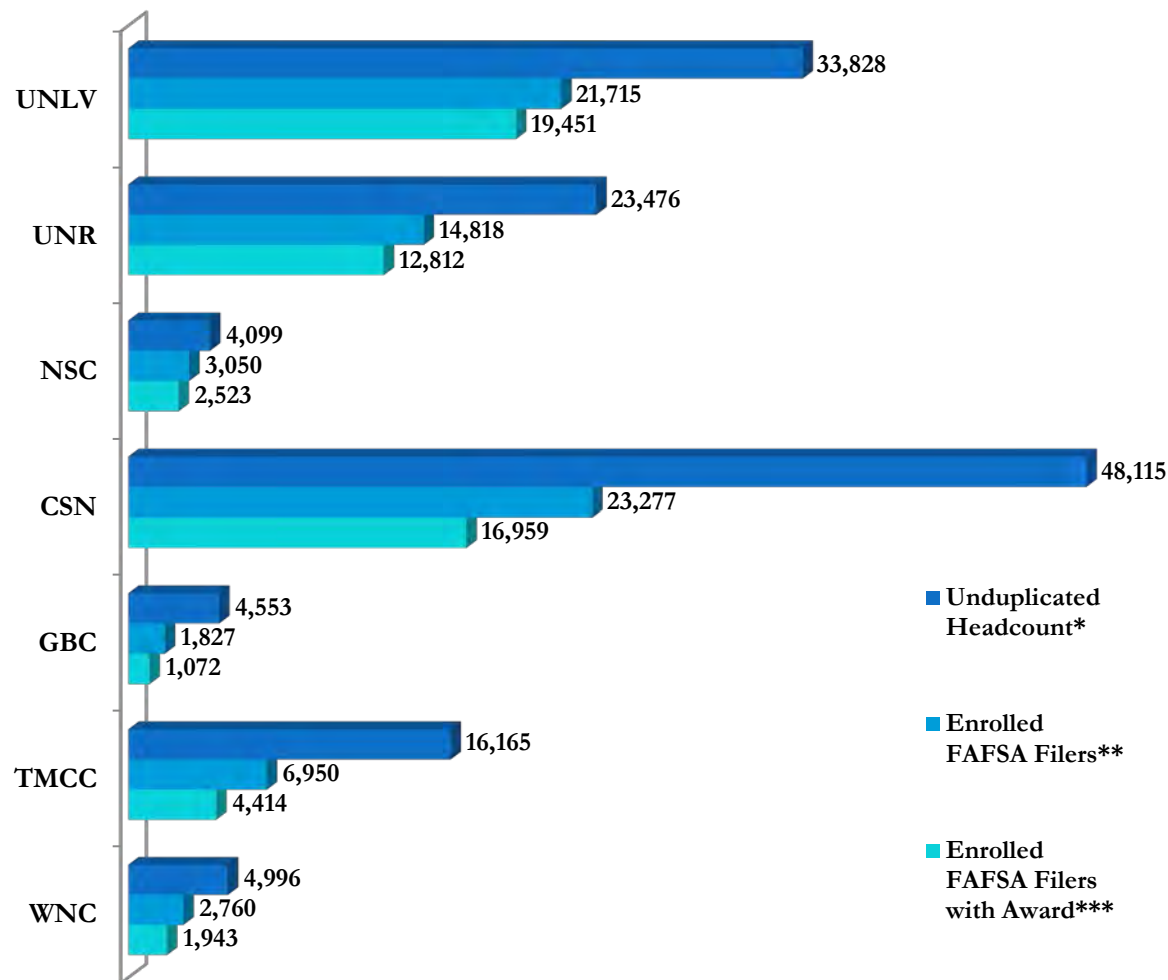
Dependent Students			Independent Students		
Income Range	Students	Dollars	Income Range	Students	Dollars
\$19,999 or less	165	\$268,688	\$2,999 or less	115	\$337,612
\$20,000 - \$39,999	221	\$300,009	\$3,000 - \$5,999	28	\$84,470
\$40,000 - \$49,999	80	\$116,421	\$6,000 - \$9,999	57	\$197,795
\$50,000 - \$59,999	46	\$83,191	\$10,000 - \$14,999	54	\$194,163
\$60,000 - \$79,999	34	\$47,443	\$15,000 - \$19,999	59	\$204,034
\$80,000 - \$99,999	10	\$17,122	\$20,000 - \$29,999	99	\$335,843
\$100,000 or more	1	\$296	\$30,000 - \$39,999	44	\$129,316
Total	557	\$833,169	\$40,000 - \$49,999	19	\$70,710
Median Income: \$21,850			\$50,000 or more	31	\$112,890
			Total	506	\$1,666,832
			Median Income: \$14,823		

*Unduplicated count by institution is 1,064. Unduplicated count NSHE-wide is 1,063 (one student started at an eligible institution in fall and transferred to another in spring).

NSHE Financial Aid Applicants and Recipients

Figure 12 shows the number of enrolled FAFSA filers (financial aid applicants) as compared to the IPEDS unduplicated institutional headcount and to the number of enrolled FAFSA filers who received at least one financial aid award. In 2015-16 the percentage of enrolled students who completed the FAFSA dropped from 58.2 percent in 2013-14 to 49.9 percent in 2014-15 and then again to 43.8% in 2015-16. However, the percentage of enrolled FAFSA applicants receiving a financial aid award was strong during 2015-16, at 79.5 percent.

Figure 12 NSHE Total Enrolled Students, FAFSA Filers and Awards
2015-16



*Twelve-month unduplicated headcount figures are as reported by each institution to IPEDS and do not correspond to the official headcount figures reported that are for a single semester.

**FAFSA filers who were enrolled at least one term. A single student may be counted by more than one institution.

***FAFSA Filers who were enrolled at least one term and received at least one award. Not all financial aid requires the FAFSA.

NSHE Financial Aid Recipient Race & Ethnicity

Table 11 provides the percent distribution of financial aid recipients in the various racial/ethnic categories, by institution. In 2015-16, as in prior years, CSN awarded the highest percentage of Black, Hispanic and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students, while UNLV awarded the highest percentage of Asian students, and GBC awarded the highest percentage of American Indian or Alaska Native students.

**Table 11 – NSHE Financial Aid Recipients by Race/Ethnicity* and Institution
2015-16 (percent distribution)**

	UNLV	UNR	NSC	CSN	GBC	TMCC	WNC
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.3%	0.9%	0.5%	0.7%	5.6%	1.5%	3.3%
Asian	14.0%	8.0%	9.8%	8.2%	1.0%	5.4%	1.5%
Black, non-Hispanic	10.3%	5.1%	13.2%	19.7%	3.0%	3.5%	2.5%
Hispanic	27.3%	21.3%	28.0%	28.8%	19.5%	26.9%	19.1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1.3%	0.7%	1.5%	1.9%	1.0%	0.1%	0.8%
Two or More Races	9.7%	6.7%	5.8%	6.3%	2.5%	4.3%	3.2%
White, non-Hispanic	37.1%	57.3%	41.2%	34.4%	67.4%	58.2%	69.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Percentages exclude unknown race/ethnicity category.

Table 12 provides data on the percent distribution of financial aid disbursements in 2015-16 to students in the various racial/ethnic categories, by institution. This distribution is similar to those above for percentage of recipients.

**Table 12 – NSHE Financial Aid Disbursements by Race/Ethnicity* and Institution
2015-16 (percent distribution)**

	UNLV	UNR	NSC	CSN	GBC	TMCC	WNC
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.4%	0.9%	0.6%	0.8%	5.6%	2.0%	4.0%
Asian	13.0%	7.5%	9.7%	7.7%	0.7%	5.5%	1.1%
Black, non-Hispanic	11.7%	6.0%	14.1%	21.3%	3.3%	4.0%	3.0%
Hispanic	23.5%	20.8%	25.2%	26.7%	18.5%	24.8%	18.1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1.5%	0.7%	1.8%	1.8%	1.0%	0.1%	0.8%
Two or More Races	9.3%	6.9%	6.0%	6.3%	2.2%	4.4%	3.2%
White, non-Hispanic	40.7%	57.1%	42.5%	35.4%	68.6%	59.2%	69.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Percentages exclude unknown race/ethnicity category.

Appendix A

Table 13 – NSHE Total Aid Disbursed by Type (Need/Non-Need)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	1-Year % Change	5-Year % Change
Grants NB	\$148,255,691	\$149,495,126	\$155,097,252	\$162,637,710	\$159,283,095	-2.1%	7.4%
Grants NN	\$5,154,999	\$6,621,694	\$5,974,270	\$10,050,595	\$5,905,759	-41.2%	14.6%
Grants Total	\$153,410,690	\$156,116,820	\$161,071,523	\$172,688,306	\$165,188,854	-4.3%	7.7%
Grants % NB	96.6%	95.8%	96.3%	94.2%	96.4%		
Grants-in-Aid NB	\$158,407	\$78,534	\$97,015	\$80,618	\$101,227	25.6%	-36.1%
Grants-in-Aid NN	\$13,263,626	\$15,280,646	\$17,851,252	\$18,776,343	\$16,719,895	-11.0%	26.1%
Grants-in-Aid Total	\$13,422,033	\$15,359,180	\$17,948,267	\$18,856,961	\$16,821,122	-10.8%	25.3%
Grants-in-Aid % NB	1.2%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.6%		
Scholarships NB	\$1,513,776	\$702,808	\$4,702,387	\$5,150,217	\$7,372,784	43.2%	387.0%
Scholarships NN	\$50,074,249	\$52,197,062	\$49,580,467	\$56,132,430	\$63,027,112	12.3%	25.9%
Scholarships Total	\$51,588,024	\$52,899,871	\$54,282,854	\$61,282,648	\$70,399,896	14.9%	36.5%
Scholarships % NB	2.9%	1.3%	8.7%	8.4%	10.5%		
Loans NB	\$104,334,693	\$79,336,375	\$89,686,397	\$90,851,522	\$81,357,252	-10.5%	-22.0%
Loans NN	\$158,741,329	\$183,585,617	\$195,776,147	\$206,629,288	\$194,006,175	-6.1%	22.2%
Loans Total	\$263,076,022	\$262,921,992	\$285,462,544	\$297,480,810	\$275,363,427	-7.4%	4.7%
Loans % NB	39.7%	30.2%	31.4%	30.5%	29.5%		
Employment NB	\$4,262,357	\$4,717,582	\$3,548,393	\$4,056,643	\$4,050,295	-0.2%	-5.0%
Employment NN	\$44,404,630	\$48,712,091	\$52,352,157	\$52,175,651	\$55,846,014	7.0%	25.8%
Employment Total	\$48,666,987	\$53,429,673	\$55,900,550	\$56,232,294	\$59,896,310	6.5%	23.1%
Employment % NB	8.8%	8.8%	6.3%	7.2%	6.8%		
Total Need-Based*	\$258.5	\$234.3	\$253.1	\$262.8	\$252.2	-4.0%	-2.5%
NB %	48.8%	43.3%	44.0%	43.3%	42.9%		
Total Non-Need*	\$271.6	\$306.4	\$321.5	\$343.8	\$335.5	-2.4%	23.5%
NN %	51.2%	56.7%	56.0%	56.7%	57.1%		
Grand Total*	\$530.2	\$540.7	\$574.7	\$606.5	\$587.7	-3.1%	10.8%

* dollars in millions

Key

NB = Need-based

NN =Non-need-based

Appendix B

Table 14 - NSHE Total Loan Disbursements from All Sources

	2014-15	2015-16	1-Year % Change
UNLV	\$136,934,905	\$141,198,744	3.1%
UNR	\$78,540,962	\$82,239,318	4.7%
NSC	\$12,516,342	\$11,785,609	-5.8%
CSN	\$53,814,737	\$27,399,958	-49.1%
GBC	\$1,844,732	\$2,044,022	10.8%
TMCC	\$9,025,595	\$7,137,863	-20.9%
WNC	\$4,803,537	\$3,557,914	-25.9%
Total	\$297,480,810	\$275,363,427	-7.4%

Appendix C

Regents Higher Education Opportunity Award Methodologies

UNLV

UNLV awarded RHEOA proportionally to graduate and undergraduate students primarily by EFC level. Most of the funds were utilized as grant awards, followed by employment awards, and finally scholarships. RHEOA funds were used to meet scholarship matching requirements for the Latin Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Employment Program, Indian Affairs and GEAR UP. Students received amounts that varied from \$1200 to \$6,470 depending upon their level of need, matching requirement, or scholarship pledge.

UNR

State-Supported

All state access funds were awarded based on need. All need-based funds were awarded first-come first-serve based on cost of attendance, EFC, and remaining need. A portion of the state undergraduate funds are used to meet the required Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) match.

Fee-Generated

Based on anticipated revenue for the academic year, the undergraduate funds were split 80 percent need based and 20 percent merit scholarships. The graduate split was 50 percent need based and 50 percent merit. All fee-generated need based funds were awarded as described above. The non-need based funds were used to fund scholarships for both graduate and undergraduate students and work-study for undergraduate students only. The allocation to fund international students is proportional to the international students in the entire student body the prior fall term.

NSC

RHEOA funds were awarded to students through need- and non-need based grants, on a first-come, first-served basis. Need-based funds were awarded as Nevada State Access Grants to students with a primary EFC of 7500 or less, or as Nevada State College Grants to Pell-ineligible students with an EFC of 15000 or less. Non-need awards were awarded on a case-by-case basis, to remedy packaging deficiencies or otherwise supplement award offers for students without need.

CSN

RHEOA funds were used primarily for need-based awards on a first-come, first-serve basis. Funds were also used to meet state matching requirements in the GEAR UP program as well as federal matching requirements for TRiO grants.

GBC

Fees-generated RHEOA was awarded through an automated process primarily to students with an EFC greater than 2500 and state-supported RHEOA to students with an EFC greater than 5000. However, students in desperate need of financial assistance who met all other eligibility requirements were awarded on a case-by-case basis, regardless of EFC.

TMCC

RHEOA funds were awarded to students with specific EFC ranges that are determined annually in order to assist TMCC's diverse student population. A commitment is made to provide a percentage of these funds to the student employment program, which supports student retention. On a rare and individual case-by-case basis, students who do not fit normal institutional guidelines may be awarded due to unusual or extenuating circumstances. A small portion of funds were set aside to provide grants to low-income first-generation students in TMCC's summer bridge program. A second small portion was allocated as a match for qualified GEAR UP students. A portion of RHEOA funds were allocated to the Freshman Incentive Grant, TMCC Incentive Grant and Graduation Incentive Grant, all of which provide higher than the standard grant amount, and are awarded to eligible students enrolled full time and on track to graduate.

WNC

Western Nevada College, Financial Assistance Office uses a priority funding deadline of April 1st each year to award students who apply early. The FAO primarily awards State-Funded and Fee Generated Access Aid to lowest Expected Family Contribution, highest need, and on a first come/first serve basis through a variety of different grant programs.

State-Supported

- Nevada Resident Award: awarded to NV Residents, lowest Expected Family Contribution, highest need, and on a first come/first serve basis.
- WEST Grant: awarded to NV Residents, lowest Expected Family Contribution, highest need, and with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Fee Generated

- WNC Award: lowest Expected Family Contribution (EFC), highest need, and on a first come/first serve basis.
- WNC Non Need Award: awarding reserved to assist students with special financial circumstances.
- WNC 15 to Finish Award (new 2015-2016): lowest Expected Family Contribution (EFC), highest need, and enrolled in 15 credit or more.
- Latino Cohort Award (new 2015-2016): awarded to student who are part of the WNC Latino Cohort program and are enrolled in EPY 150.