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Fiscal Year 2024 Higher Education State Budget is Largest in Decades *Historic Investments Will Help Close Equity Gaps and Increase Affordability*

SPRINGFIELD – The General Assembly passed and Governor JB Pritzker has signed a fiscal year 2024 state budget that includes a historic appropriation of \$2.53 billion for higher education, an increase of \$279 million (12.4 percent) compared to the previous fiscal year and the largest increase in over 20 years. Notable highlights from the budget include a \$100 million increase for the Monetary Award Program (MAP), an \$80.5 million (7 percent) increase for public universities, \$19.4 million (7 percent) increase for community colleges, a \$3.8 million increase to the Minority Teachers of Illinois Scholarship Program (MTI) to recruit and retain minority teachers, and a \$15 million increase for the AIM HIGH program.

The budget also includes an investment of \$6 million for Grow Your Own (an increase of \$3.5 million), \$15.75 million for Golden Apple (an increase of \$8.5 million) and \$975,000 for the Teachers Loan Repayment Program (an increase of \$535,000) – all of which are key in helping address teacher workforce needs.

“This year’s budget steps up our direct support for higher education institutions by \$100 million—the largest dollar and percent increase in more than twenty years,” **said Governor JB Pritzker.** “And by raising the number and amount of college scholarships to a record-breaking, all-time high of more than \$750 million, we’re making it possible for nearly every student from a working-class family to attend community college tuition free and fee free—a huge step towards closing the education gap and advancing equity here in Illinois.”

“In Illinois, we stand with our students, teachers and families. The passage of the Fiscal Year 2024 Higher Education State Budget paves the way for us to go even further. Core to these historic investments is uplifting families, while also providing the building blocks for our children's futures,” **said Lieutenant Governor, Juliana Stratton.** “The allocated \$2.53 billion will allow students to have access to educators and programs that will help cease the gaps in disparities and inequity. I’m proud of the work that Governor Pritzker and the General Assembly continue to do to strengthen our communities in Illinois.”

“These historic investments in our state’s higher education system will continue to help close equity gaps and foster a diverse workforce that will lead to an inclusive and thriving Illinois economy,” **said Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Chair John Atkinson.** “Governor Pritzker and the General Assembly understand that there is a need for a stronger, more skilled, and more diverse workforce, and we are excited to continue to work toward those goals.”

“The Illinois community college system is incredibly grateful to Governor Pritzker and state lawmakers for this increased investment in operational and workforce training in the coming year. As community colleges across the state continue to see enrollment increases and magnify their impact on more students, this additional funding will help expand access to Illinoisans and ensure our state has the trained workforce it needs through additional programs and learning opportunities,” **said Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Chair, Dr. Lazaro Lopez.**

“The historic, equity-driven investments in this budget will help close equity gaps for students, especially Black, Latino, low-income, rural and working adult learners,” **said IBHE Executive Director Ginger Ostro.** “Increased investments in crucial areas will help ensure we have a strong higher education system that is affordable and one where students have the necessary supports and resources they need to complete their studies.”

The increase to MAP funding by \$100 million takes another giant step toward ensuring higher education is affordable for students across Illinois, a crucial strategy in the state’s strategic plan for higher education, [A Thriving Illinois](#). This increases funding for MAP to \$701 million – putting the state closer to its MAP funding goal.

“Thanks to substantial increases in MAP funding, in FY 22 we were able to offer awards to all eligible applicants for the first time in two decades, and our goal is to do the same in FY 23 and FY 24,” **said Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) Executive Director Eric Zarnikow.** “With an additional increase bringing the total MAP appropriation to yet another historic high of \$701 million, MAP awards can cover more of tuition and fees: In FY 24, we estimate that a maximum MAP award will cover 60% of average tuition and fees at a community college, and 51% at an Illinois public university. This funding, in combination with increases to AIM HIGH, our teacher scholarships, and other programs, will create what could be life-changing opportunities for many Illinoisans striving to reach their educational and career goals, and will help ensure that we meet workforce needs with skilled professionals that reflect the diversity of this state. We thank the Governor and the General Assembly for their ongoing commitment to our students and to our future.”

The budget includes a 7 percent increase in operating funds or \$19.4 million more for community colleges than the previous year—the highest increase in two decades. It also includes an additional \$18 million in workforce training. This increased investment will ensure a robust trained workforce for Illinois’ current and emerging industries and countless good paying careers for tens of thousands of Illinoisans from all walks of life. The funding will allow Illinois’ community colleges to create new cutting-edge programs in several areas including advanced manufacturing for vehicle electrification to address the workforce needs in this rapidly growing industry, data center curriculum development to support employers as they meet the increasing needs of their businesses and to assist adult education students in today’s digital learning age, especially for those with financial or childcare challenges.

“An investment in Illinois community colleges is an investment in Illinois’ residents, opening doors and increasing access to their educational and career goals. The increased funding for the community college system, as well as the historically high funding for the MAP grant, will, when combined with the federal Pell grant, provide working class families with an opportunity for a free community college education that will empower them to learn the skills they need to move into good-paying careers or on path to a baccalaureate degree. Community college students across the state will benefit from the commitment that Governor Pritzker and the General Assembly have made to their education,” **said ICCB Executive Director Brian Durham.**

The fiscal year 2024 state budget includes:

- \$100 million increase for MAP
- \$80.5 million (7 percent) increase for public universities
- \$19.4 million (7 percent) increase for community colleges
- \$50 million for AIM HIGH program for public university students
- \$10 million for a new grant program to develop programs in Advanced Manufacturing and Electric Vehicle Technologies
- \$12.6 million for student mental health supports
- \$1 million for data center curriculum development
- \$3 million for a new grant for institutions that serve large proportions of low-income students
- \$3.15 million for a new community college Dual Credit Grant program
- \$5.15 million for new community college Non-credit Workforce Training Grants
- \$3.8 million increase to Minority Teachers of Illinois Scholarship to support minority teachers-in-training
- \$2.75 million to expand English as a Second Language (ESL) and for digital instruction in adult education programs
- \$2.0 million to provide grants and supports to End Student Housing Insecurity
- \$1.5 million for nursing school grants
- \$800,000 for nurse educator fellowships

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