

DIVERSE  
AFFORDABLE  
PERSONAL  
INVOLVED  
FLEXIBLE  
SUCCESSFUL

INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES: *a national profile*

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# *a national profile*

Independent colleges and universities are **DIVERSE** in their depth and variety — in their students, mission, academic offerings, and tuition levels. In the pages that follow, we'll briefly tell the story of these private, nonprofit institutions through facts and numbers but also through profiles of a few of the people who are part of these extraordinary campuses.

You may be surprised to learn just how **AFFORDABLE** these institutions can be — making a quality private college education an attainable goal for students from every walk of life. That's a result of generous financial aid programs, which often include sizeable grants from the institutions' own funds. And in today's economy, more than ever, private colleges are working to contain costs, improve efficiency, and ensure that students graduate on time — all while keeping tuition as low as possible without compromising educational quality. Finances need not be a barrier to a private college education for any student.

A private college education is a highly **PERSONAL** experience. It's marked by faculty who care about students as individuals; a wide array of counseling and guidance services; and a warm community of students, faculty, and staff who respect and support each other.

Independent colleges and universities are **INVOLVED** in the world beyond the classroom and campus in countless ways — as major employers, sources of a pool of engaged volunteers, and leaders in research to benefit all of society. Many of these institutions also have joined with their neighbors beyond campus in innovative and ambitious partnerships to revitalize their local communities.

The nation's more than 1,600 private colleges and universities are **FLEXIBLE** enough in their programs and convenient enough in their locations to meet the needs of virtually everyone pursuing higher education — whether coming directly out of high school, returning as an older degree student, or improving career skills part-time while continuing to work. Students can select a private college close to home or get away to the kind of campus setting they prefer: urban, suburban, or rural. Private colleges' flexibility and ease of access also extend to their hours and their course offerings, as well as to serving students where they live or work through satellite campuses.

Whatever students' expectations and needs, the real measure of their college education is how **SUCCESSFUL** they become. That means far more than just salaries or status. The greatest success that private college graduates achieve may lie in the social, ethical, reasoning, and leadership skills they gain through the caring, supportive environment they find on campus. In learning to think critically and communicate effectively, and by approaching learning as an ongoing quest, private college students develop the abilities that will serve them well wherever life may take them.

# DIVERSITY

AFFORDABLE  
PERSONAL  
INVOLVED  
FLEXIBLE  
SUCCESSFUL

Private, nonprofit colleges and universities offer degrees in nearly 1,000 fields of study.

The ethnic and racial diversity of students across private four-year colleges and universities is comparable to that of students at public four-year institutions.

Regardless of socio-economic background and academic preparation, most students are as likely to earn their bachelor's degrees in four years at an independent college or university as they are in six years at a state institution.

Independent colleges and universities are as diverse as the nation itself. They include traditional liberal arts colleges; major research universities; church- and faith-related institutions; historically black colleges and universities; women's colleges; two-year colleges; and schools of law, medicine, engineering, art, business, and other professions.

The more than 1,600 independent colleges and universities in the United States enroll 3.7 million students. The number of students at each of these institutions ranges from fewer than 100 to more than 45,000, with an average student population of about 2,300.

This variety offers students a choice in the type of educational experience that will best serve their interests, needs, and aspirations. As a result, the students attending independent colleges and universities are a far more diverse group than many realize. They represent every point on the socio-economic scale, including those with the lowest family incomes. They bring a wide range of ethnic and racial backgrounds to campus. And while many are traditional college age, many others are older adults intent on resuming or completing their college education.

*“I’m now more aware of those who are different from me, with different perceptions.”*



Daisy Vargas, Senior  
Quinnipiac University  
Hamden, Connecticut





*“Diversity has been important to me. I had some adjustments, but now I don’t want to leave.”*

**Daisy Vargas, Senior**  
**Quinnipiac University, Hamden, Connecticut**

*Hometown:* New York City

*Major:* Broadcasting

*Future Plans:* I want to be a TV beat reporter and, one day, a TV news anchor. I’ve wanted to be a news person since I was 9.

*Favorite Activities:* I love to organize events, and I love everything about television — but I’m not a couch potato.

*On Paying for College:* My mother is a single mom, so we really had to talk about that. With my scholarships and grants, plus work-study, we can make it, and we know that it’s worth it.

*Most Influential Person:* My older sister. We’re eight years apart, and I watched her in college and modeled who I am on her. All of my values, all of my beliefs, it’s her.

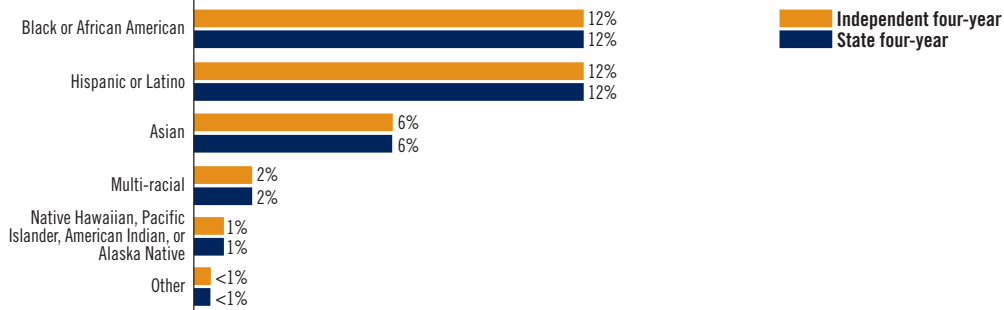
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FOR DAISY, WHO COMES FROM A LARGE URBAN HIGH SCHOOL IN NEW YORK City, a campus in suburban Connecticut was a world apart. “I didn’t really think about just how different it would be until I moved in,” she remembers. Then there were the academic challenges, such as learning a very different kind of writing — news writing — and getting terrible grades. “Then my professor sat me down and showed me what I should be doing. It was hard, but he taught me what it would really be like when I become a news reporter.”

Now she’s reaching out to others back home. “My year-end project was to go back to my high school and talk with students about how important it is for minorities to go to college,” Daisy says. “I wanted to let them know that they can do it, because I’m doing it.”



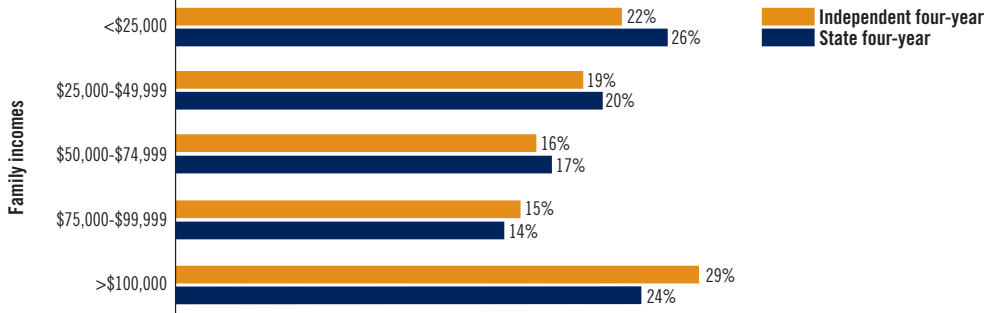
### Independent colleges and universities educate students from diverse backgrounds



Percentage of undergraduate enrollment

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NPSAS: 2008. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

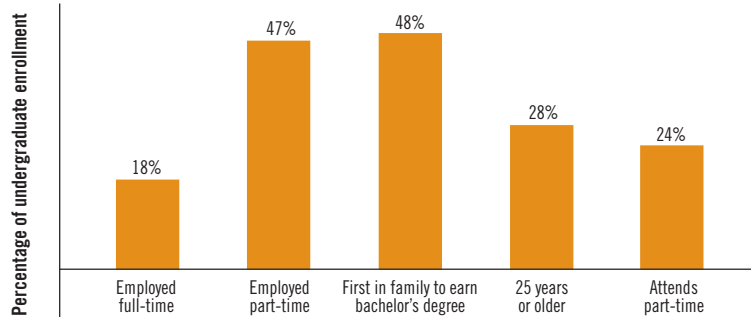
### Independent colleges and universities educate undergraduates from all family incomes



Percentage of undergraduate enrollment

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NPSAS: 2008. Totals do not equal 100% due to rounding. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

### Independent colleges and universities serve all types of students



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NPSAS: 2008. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

DIVERSE

Almost 60 percent of independent four-year colleges have published tuition and fees under \$25,000 per year.

AFFORDABLE

PERSONAL

As a group, students receiving grant aid paid an average of just 45 percent of the published tuition and fees after their grant aid was applied.

Students from families of all income levels can afford a quality education at an independent college and university. Of all full-time, dependent undergraduate students going to a private, nonprofit college all year, 89 percent received some form of financial aid in 2007-08; the average annual aid for these students was close to \$22,000.

Much of this financial aid comes from the institutions' own resources. In 2007-08, private colleges and universities provided more than \$19 billion in institutional grants that students don't have to repay.

In 2010-11, the average annual tuition and fees at four-year private colleges and universities was \$27,293. That number is a bit misleading, though. First, nearly 60 percent of all four-year private colleges and universities have average tuition and fees of under \$25,000 — and more than a quarter are between \$10,000 and \$20,000 per year.

Second, most students pay considerably less than the “sticker price,” depending on their financial resources. For example, students receiving grant aid (which doesn't have to be repaid) pay less than half of the published tuition and fees. Those students demonstrating the greatest financial need pay only 30 percent of the sticker price.

Even private college students who do pay the full tuition and fees, however, still pay much less than the actual cost of their education. Independent institutions cover additional costs through sources such as earnings from endowment, gifts from alumni and other donors, and various other revenue streams the colleges may have.

INVOLVED

FLEXIBLE

SUCCESS



*“I checked it out and found the cost here would be about the same as a public university.”*

Sarah Schlitter, Junior  
Simpson College  
Indianola, Iowa



**Sarah Schlitter, Junior**  
**Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa**

*Hometown:* Gladbrook, Iowa

*“My parents and I realized that at a private college you get so much more in scholarships and grants.”*

*Major:* Accounting and Economics

*Career Plans:* I want to get my CPA, then work in public accounting and see where that takes me.

*Favorite Activities:* I’m treasurer of the student government, love intramural sports, and enjoy playing the piano.

*The Appeal of a Small College:* Here I know all of my professors, and they know me. They’re always willing to help you and want you to succeed.

*Working on Campus:* I’m a work-study student and have worked in the financial aid office here for the past two years.

*Most Influential Person:* Here at college it would be my advisor, who is one of my accounting professors. We talk about things beyond class, like what I want to do with my life.



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HAVING GROWN UP IN A SMALL IOWA TOWN, SARAH FOUND THE PROSPECT OF going away to college a bit scary — both culturally and financially. “Coming here and experiencing the diversity helped me realize that there’s more to life than just the Midwest,” she says. “I feel so much more confident now. College has opened my eyes to see the big picture.”

Sarah likes the small classes and the way students are encouraged to share their different perspectives. “I feel like I’m getting a very good education,” she remarks. And thanks to a package of grants, scholarships, work-study, and loans, Sarah and her family were able to handle everything financially. “The college has been really helpful in making it affordable for my family and me,” she says.



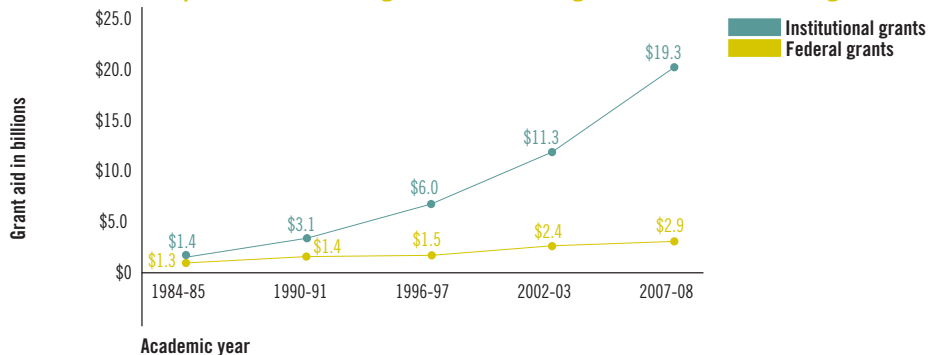
### Most students at independent institutions pay less than the published price



Source: College Board *Trends in College Pricing 2010, Average Net Price, Figure 7*. Data represent full-time undergraduate students attending four-year independent institutions only. Net tuition and fees are after grant aid and tax benefits are deducted from the published tuition and fees. Net prices for 2010-11 are estimated based on past years and available information about changes in financial aid. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10s.



### Independent institutions give students more grant aid than the federal government



Source: Federal Campus-Based Programs Data Book, U.S. Department of Education, various years; Title IV/Federal Pell Grant Program End-of-Year Report, U.S. Department of Education, various years; College Board, *Trends in Student Aid*, various years; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Finance Component, various years. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. Note: Data on federal grant programs include funds only for students attending independent colleges and universities.

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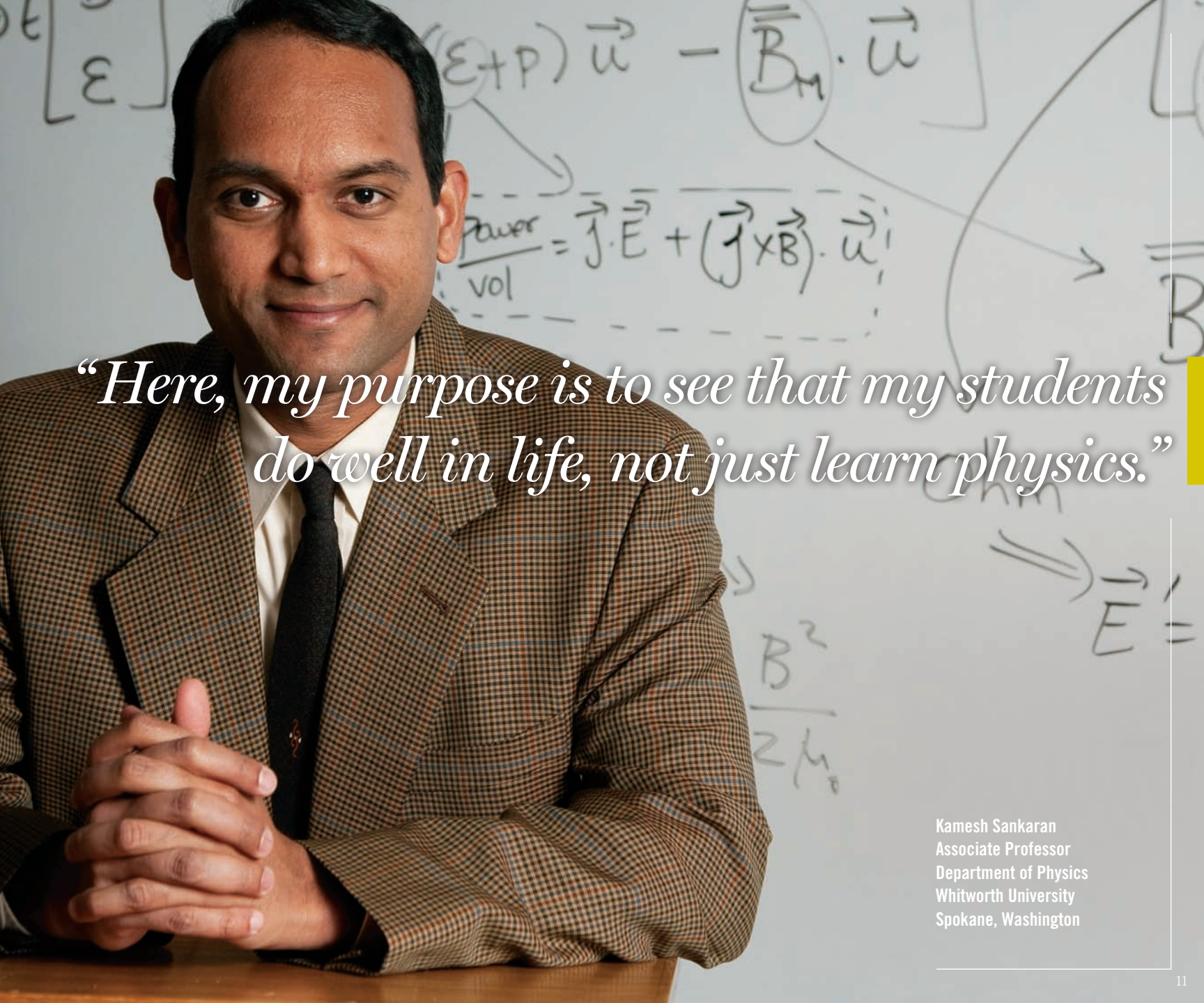
SUCCESSFUL

The largest portion of private college and university students' tuition dollars goes to expense categories that benefit them directly: instruction, student services, and grant aid for students.

Students at private, nonprofit colleges and universities find their education to be a highly personal experience. They are taught by professors who care about them as individuals; they have access to a wide array of counseling services; and they become part of a warm community of students, faculty, and staff who respect and support each other. Often this personal

experience is a result of campus size. Almost 30 percent of all four-year independent institutions have a total undergraduate enrollment of fewer than 1,000 students, compared to 11 percent of state four-year institutions.

Students at private colleges and universities typically enjoy a lower student-to-faculty ratio — meaning smaller classes than at many state colleges and universities. They are also more likely to interact with faculty outside of the classroom. This personal attention carries powerful benefits. Data show that students at private colleges and universities are far more likely to complete their degrees and that they have a higher level of satisfaction with their college experience.



*“Here, my purpose is to see that my students do well in life, not just learn physics.”*

Kamesh Sankaran  
Associate Professor  
Department of Physics  
Whitworth University  
Spokane, Washington





**Kamesh Sankaran, Associate Professor**  
**Department of Physics, Whitworth University, Spokane, Washington**

*Hometown:* A little town in southern India. I came here when I was 17.

*Degrees:* B.S., Illinois Institute of Technology; M.A., M.S., Ph.D., Princeton University

*Area of Specialization:* Spacecraft propulsion, specifically plasma propulsion engines

*How I See My Role as a Professor:* I don't believe that education should be only about developing a person's mind. It has to also be about the person's heart, spirit, beliefs.

*“Even if you are a scientist, you still have to function in society. The decisions you make have complex social and ethical implications.”*

*Contributions to My Field:* Summers I go back to NASA to work with colleagues, and I take undergraduates with me. I've approached it as a package deal — if you want me, you have to take my students.

*Work in My Field Beyond Campus:* I continue to work with my colleagues at NASA on plasma propulsion and consult with the Institute for Shock Physics at Washington State University. I include my students in both these research projects.

*My Biggest Worry About Science Education:* The limited amount of federal funding for science and engineering programs at small colleges.

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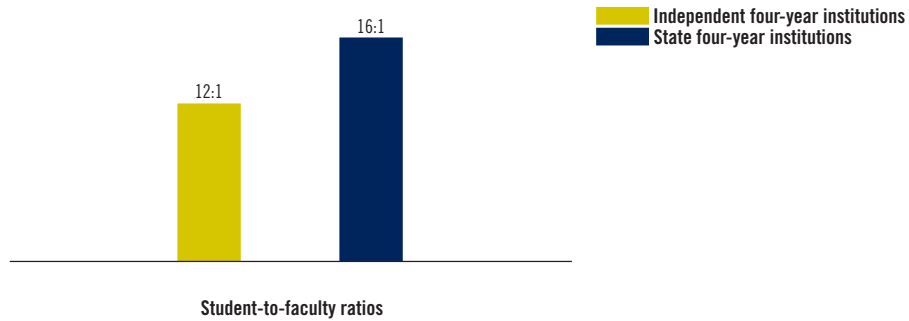
PEOPLE MIGHT NOT EXPECT TO FIND A RENOWNED ASTROPHYSICIST — A GENUINE ROCKET scientist! — at a small liberal arts university. As Kamesh sees it, though, “While I enjoy my research, I don't see that as all I am.” Growing up in India, he dreamed of working with NASA on space travel — even though his parents did not finish high school. Now he fulfills that dream while also teaching and counseling students.

“I've come further than I ever hoped in life, and I want others to feel the sense of excitement that I feel about this field,” Kamesh says. “I know my students really well — what's going on in their lives, their backgrounds, their hopes and fears. That helps me be a better teacher. And I can't think of anything better to do with my life.”





## Fewer students per faculty member means more personal attention at private, nonprofit colleges



Source: NCES, Digest of Education Statistics 2009, Table 220 and Table 244. Graduate assistants are excluded. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.



## Students are more satisfied with the personal experience at private institutions

### *The top five aspects of satisfaction*

1. Class size
2. Courses in students' major field
3. Student interaction
4. Overall quality of instruction
5. Overall college experience

Source: Higher Education Research Institute, College Student Longitudinal Survey 2007-08.

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**Currently, 1.7 million undergraduate students at four-year private colleges and universities volunteer in their communities—a contribution of time estimated at over \$6.9 billion in value.**

Private, nonprofit colleges and universities are involved in the world beyond the classroom and campus in countless ways — as major employers, as sources of a ready pool of volunteers, and as centers of scientific and cultural advances that benefit all of society. Many private colleges and universities have joined with their off-campus neighbors in ambitious partnerships to revitalize the local community and have taken their expertise, caring, and energy to countries around the world.

Private institutions of higher education employ more than a million people nationwide and are frequently one of the largest private employers in their region. In 2007-08, these institutions had total revenues of over \$139 billion — a cumulative economic impact of about \$347 billion.

Being on the cutting edge of scientific discovery, these institutions annually attract more than \$14.5 billion in federal research funding — for research that helps to solve societal problems, save lives, improve citizens' quality of life, and keep the U.S. globally competitive.

Private higher education has long partnered with elementary and secondary schools to prepare teachers, support at-risk students, and help to guide and encourage students as they consider attending college. Many private colleges and universities are involved in dual-credit and dual-enrollment programs, GearUp and TRIO programs, and innovative high school outreach efforts such as early-college and summer-college programs.

A young man with short brown hair, wearing a brown blazer over a teal button-down shirt, is sitting on a wooden bench. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a brick building with white columns and windows. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, italicized serif font.

*“Even if you can’t change the world, you can find ways to make a small difference.”*

Andrew Barnhill, Senior  
Furman University  
Greenville, South Carolina





**Andrew Barnhill, Senior**  
**Furman University, Greenville, South Carolina**

*Hometown:* Wilmington, North Carolina

*Major:* Self-defined, in political science, religion, and communications

*Primary Campus Activity:* Student director of the university's Heller Service Corps, one of the nation's largest collegiate service-learning organizations, which partners with more than 40 agencies.

*Special Interest:* Exploring which groups of people are disadvantaged by the political process.

*Stress Reliever:* Running the two miles around the campus lake every afternoon.

*On My Choice of College:* I was looking for what private colleges offer: the kind of environment that really makes you feel connected to other people.

*Most Influential People:* First, Hugh O'Brien, who founded the HOBY youth program I've been involved in since high school. Second, Nancy Cooper, Furman's Service Corps advisor, who helps me see the needs beyond this campus.

*“Service is at the center of our campus culture, and even in Greek life, service takes precedence over social aspects.”*

*Future Plans:* Graduate school, possibly divinity school, to explore ethics and social justice.

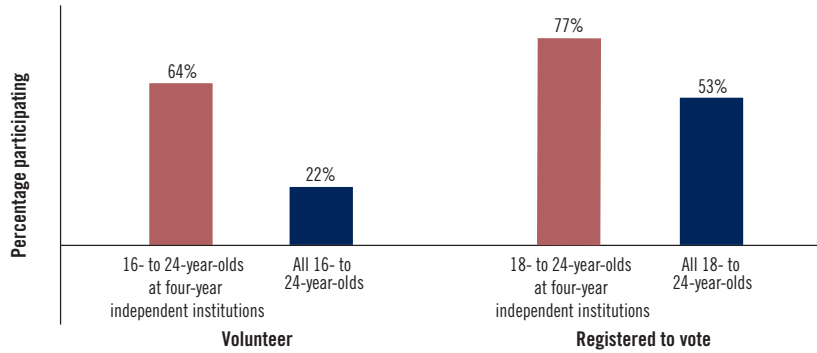
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AS STUDENT DIRECTOR OF THE HELLER SERVICE CORPS, ANDREW EQUIPS STUDENTS TO become actively engaged in their community. Why do busy college students take the time to do that? “Here, I think it starts with the way we recruit students,” he says. “From the time they set foot on campus until they leave, we’re encouraging them to volunteer — whether in some kind of direct service or larger social change.”

Andrew is a notable role model for them. His studies and service earned him a Lilly Endowment-funded trip to Mexico, where he explored issues affecting disabled children in impoverished communities. He’s also been an advocate for legislation that would provide foreign aid to these children.



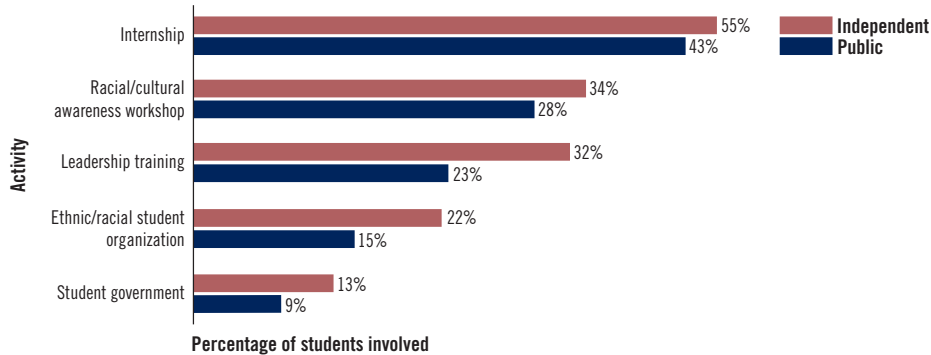
## Young people attending independent colleges and universities are more likely to volunteer and register to vote



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NPSAS: 2008. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Volunteering in the United States, 2008, and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, November 2008. Percentages represent U.S. citizens only. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.



## Students at independent colleges and universities are involved on campus and in their communities



Source: Higher Education Research Institute, College Student Longitudinal Survey 2007-08.

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SUCCESSFUL

Private colleges and universities are responsive to the needs of all kinds of students. Many offer weekend and evening classes for working adults; satellite campuses close to students' homes or work; and online course offerings with or without an in-class component.

More than a quarter of students at independent institutions are 25 or older, and almost one-quarter attend part-time.

Although four-year residential programs remain at the heart of many of the nation's 1,600-plus private, nonprofit colleges and universities, these institutions don't just serve the traditional college-going population. Their flexible programs and convenient locations can meet the needs of older degree-program students, part-time mid-career students who want new or enhanced skills, and just about anyone else who's looking for post-secondary education.

Students can find a private college close to home or travel to the distant campus that best meets their needs. Depending on their preference, they can choose a private university in the middle of a major city, a campus nestled in the suburbs, or a college surrounded by farmland or wilderness.

Private colleges and universities are also flexible in their hours, their course offerings, and their locations. Many have established satellite campuses to better serve students close to where they live or work, as well as online education programs that allow students to take courses from home. In addition, private institutions provide a variety of programs

to support student success, from granting credit for advanced high school work and life experience to offering employment services and career counseling.





*“My professors are some of the best and brightest, and want every student to succeed.”*

Martin Koerner, Student  
School of Education  
Johns Hopkins University  
Baltimore, Maryland



**Martin Koerner, Student, School of Education  
Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland**

*Hometown:* Marion Station, on Maryland's Eastern Shore

*Educational Program:* Police Executive Leadership Program

*Employment:* Commander, Eastern Troop, Maryland State Police

*Most Unusual Recognition:* After serving as acting chief of police for the “crab capital of the world” — Crisfield, Maryland — I was given the keys to the city — a crab knife and a crab picker.

*View of Police Work:* As many times as you wind up arresting people, there are that many times you assist people.

*Leisure Activities:* I run three to five miles a day, to relieve stress. Beyond that, my personal life is very simple. If I'm not at work or at college, I'm with my family.

*Future Plans:* To become a chief of police or a sheriff once I retire from the state police.

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FROM HIGH SCHOOL, MARTIN WENT RIGHT INTO THE AIR FORCE, WHERE HE GOT about two years of college credits. He then attended the State Police Academy and has been a trooper for 20 years.

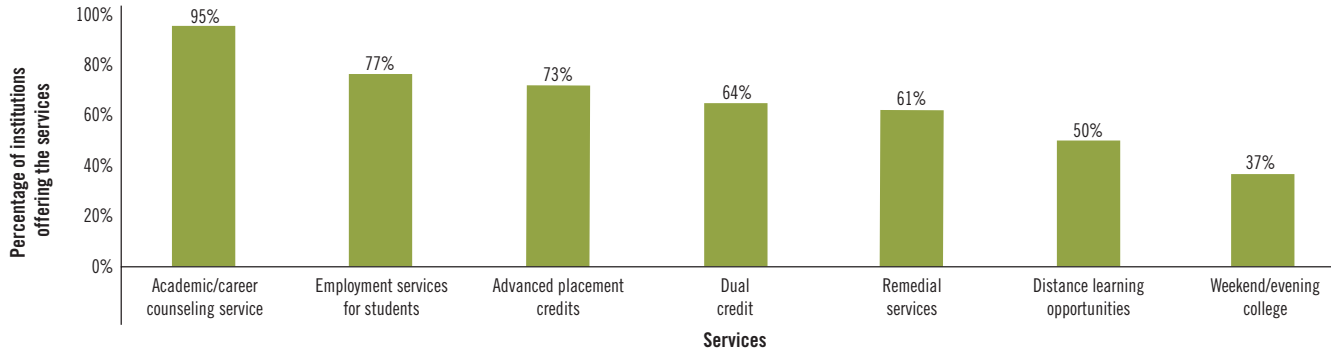
“I wanted to get my bachelor's degree, and Johns Hopkins is the only place I'd even consider,” he says. The two-year undergraduate and year-long accelerated master's degree programs are tailored to meet the



*“With four children and a wife who's a stay-at-home mom, it's tough, but the university really helped me out with student aid.”*

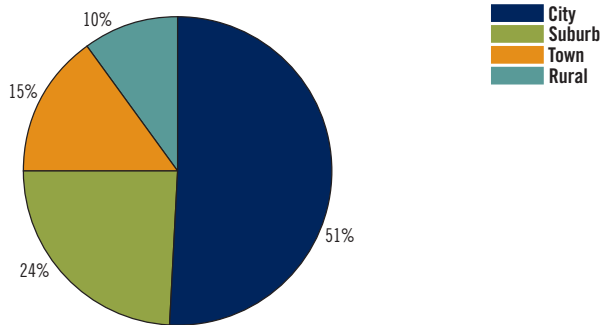
needs of police leaders in the region. “This is a family commitment, so we sat down and talked about it,” he says. “My wife is totally supportive, and my 12-year-old thinks it's really cool that his dad's going back to college.”

### Independent institutions support the needs of a wide variety of students



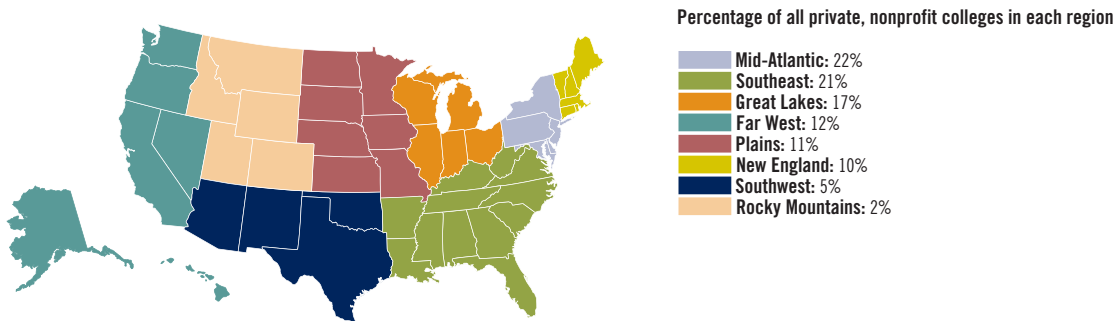
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Institutional Characteristics Component, 2009. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

### Independent institutions are located in a variety of settings



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Institutional Characteristics Component, 2009. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

### Independent institutions are located in every U.S. region



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Institutional Characteristics Component, 2009. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

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Although they enroll nearly 20 percent of all college students, private colleges and universities award nearly 30 percent of all degrees.

Of the 32 American Rhodes Scholars for 2011, two-thirds were educated at independent institutions. Of the 1,500-plus U.S. Student Fulbright Fellows named in 2010-11, more than 60 percent were from independent institutions.


Private, nonprofit colleges and universities are successful in helping students achieve their goals on the timetable that best meets their individual needs. For many, this means completing their undergraduate degrees in as short a time as possible.

Studies show that private college students are far more likely to get their degrees in four years than students at public institutions. Among all those receiving bachelor's degrees at four-year institutions, almost 80 percent of private college students were able to earn their degrees in four years or less, compared to just under 50 percent at four-year state institutions. This kind of time-to-degree advantage at private colleges also holds for all ethnic groups and for those who are the first in their families to attend college.

Hidden in these statistics is a major cost advantage for students at private colleges and universities. By getting their degrees on time, they enter the workforce and begin earning a salary sooner, plus they avoid paying tuition and fees for a fifth or sixth year of college.

However, the most important measure of private college and university students' success may lie in the social, ethical, reasoning, and leadership skills they acquire. By learning to think critically and communicate effectively, and by appreciating learning as a lifelong journey, they develop abilities that will serve them well, wherever life may take them.





Susan Romo, Alumna  
St. Mary's University  
San Antonio, Texas

*“College taught me how to think and gave me a broader world perspective.”*



**Susan Romo, Alumna**  
**St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas**

*Hometown:* El Paso, Texas

*Position:* Director, Latin American Debt Capital Markets Group, Credit Suisse, New York City

*Degrees:* B.A., St. Mary's University; Master of Public Administration in Public Policy and Finance, New York University

*Rewards of the Job:* I'm particularly proud that I helped to establish Mexico's first mortgage-backed program, which is helping the country's housing sector grow.

*Long-term Career Goal:* I've never really planned my life that way. I just try to make the best of where I am now — and I like where I am and what I'm doing.

*Interests Away from Work:* Travel. Even though I do that a lot in my work, I often go back to those places for vacation.

*Most Influential Professor:* Dr. Charles Cotrell, who was on the faculty when I was a student but now is the president of St. Mary's.

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SUSAN WAS THE FIRST IN HER FAMILY TO GO TO COLLEGE, “THANKS IN PART TO MY parents convincing me that I could do anything I wanted to do,” she recalls. Today, she works in the challenging and volatile world of international finance, and her college education gave her the skills and insights she has needed to succeed. “Going to college exposed me to new possibilities and ideas, to people from other states and countries, in a safe and nurturing environment,” she says. “It challenged me to think critically.”

Now a trustee at St. Mary's, her undergraduate university, she uses her leadership role “in helping the students make the transition from college and in doing the sort of thing I do in the workplace.”



*“Communicating, analyzing, viewing issues in a multi-dimensional way — I need to draw on all of those abilities in my work.”*



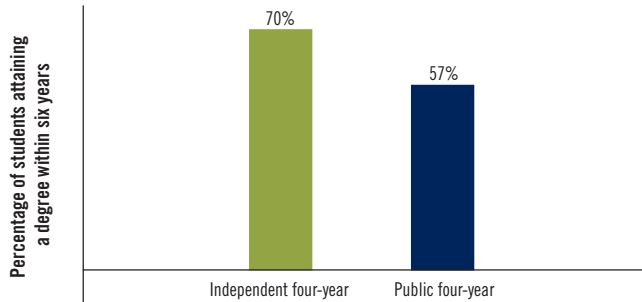
## Undergraduates at independent institutions are successful



### Percentage receiving a bachelor's degree within six years

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003-04 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Second Follow-up (BPS:04/09). Data represent bachelor's degree attainment within six years at any four-year independent institution for full-time students. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

## First-generation students are more likely to graduate at independent colleges and universities



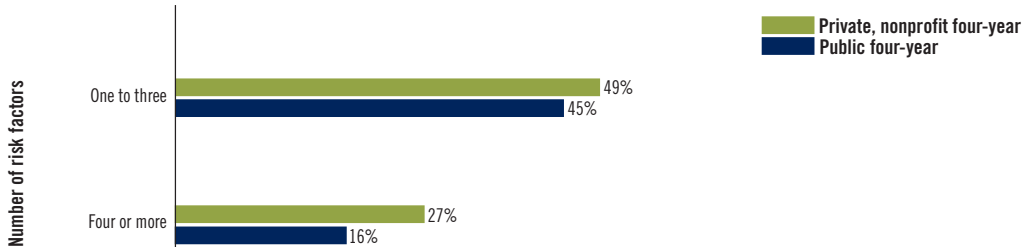
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003-04 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Second Follow-up (BPS:04/09). Data represent full-time students at four-year institutions attaining a degree within six years. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. Note: A first-generation student is defined as one whose parents' highest education level is a high school diploma or less.

## Students at independent colleges and universities develop knowledge and skills important for future success

- Ability to think critically
- Problem-solving skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Preparation for graduate or advanced education
- Preparation for employment after college
- Writing skills
- Understanding of social problems facing our nation
- Leadership abilities
- Public speaking ability

Source: Higher Education Research Institute, College Student Longitudinal Survey 2007-08.

## Students with multiple "risk factors" are more likely to succeed at independent colleges and universities



### Percentage of students attaining a bachelor's degree within six years

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003-04 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Second Follow-up (BPS: 04/09). Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. Note: Risk factors are defined as student characteristics that may adversely affect persistence and attainment. The seven characteristics are delayed enrollment after high school, no high school diploma, part-time enrollment, financially independent, having dependents, single parent status, and working full-time while enrolled.

DIVERSE

AFFORDABLE

PERSONAL

*Private, nonprofit colleges and universities are...*

INVOLVED

FLEXIBLE

SUCCESSFUL

## DIVERSE

- The more than 1,600 independent colleges and universities in the United States enroll 3.7 million students.
- The number of students at each of these institutions ranges from fewer than 100 to more than 45,000, with an average of about 2,300.
- Approximately one-third of all undergraduates at four-year private colleges are minority students — about the same as at four-year public institutions.
- Many older, working, and part-time students attend independent colleges and universities, along with “traditional” full-time students just out of high school.

## AFFORDABLE

- From 2000-01 to 2010-11, inflation-adjusted net tuition and fees declined by more than 7 percent at private colleges and universities, from \$12,230 to \$11,320 a year.
- Nearly 90 percent of all dependent, full-time, full-year private college undergraduates received some form of financial aid in 2007-08. Among these, the average annual package was nearly \$22,000 per student.
- Much of that aid to students comes from the private institutions’ own resources — more than \$19 billion in 2007-08. Private college students receive more than 6.5 times as much grant aid from their institutions as they do from federal resources.
- Students who earn bachelor’s degrees are able to do so sooner at four-year private colleges and universities than at state institutions. Finishing faster helps students at private institutions avoid extra years of tuition and begin their careers earlier.

## PERSONAL

- Student-to-faculty ratios are lower at private colleges and universities than at state institutions.
- The majority of expenditures at private institutions goes for instruction and academic support, student services, and scholarships.

## INVOLVED

- Independent colleges and universities employ more than a million people nationwide, and in many cases the institutions rank as one of the largest employers in their town or region.
- In 2007-08, private colleges and universities had an estimated \$139 billion in total revenues. As these dollars work their way through state and regional economies, their effect is multiplied into a cumulative economic impact estimated at more than \$347 billion.
- Each year, more than 1.7 million undergraduate students at private colleges and universities volunteer in their communities. The market value of their community service is estimated at almost \$7 billion.

## FLEXIBLE

- Private colleges and universities don’t just serve traditional-age full-time students. More than a quarter of their students are 25 or older, and almost one-quarter attend part-time.
- Slightly more students who support themselves or have dependents attend four-year private colleges and universities rather than four-year state institutions.
- Private colleges and universities are located in every section of the country and in settings that range from major cities to rural areas.

## SUCCESSFUL

- Although independent colleges enroll almost 20 percent of all students, they award nearly 30 percent of all degrees.
- Seventy-nine percent of students who received a bachelor’s degree from a four-year independent college or university were able to complete it in four years or less, compared with 49 percent of graduates at state institutions.
- Seventy percent of students who are the first in their families to attend college earn a degree within six years at a private four-year college or university, compared to 57 percent at a public four-year institution.

**MANY THANKS TO THE MEMBER INSTITUTIONS  
THAT ALLOWED US TO USE THEIR PHOTOGRAPHS:**

Page 4: Quinnipiac University/John Hassett

Pages 8-9: Simpson College

Pages 12-13: Whitworth University

Pages 16-17: Furman University

Page 20: Johns Hopkins University

Page 24: St. Mary's University

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*Portrait photography: Joe Rubino*

## ABOUT U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION, PRIVATE NONPROFIT COLLEGES, AND NAICU

People sometimes refer to the American higher education “system.” However it’s not a system, really, which is its great strength. Instead, higher education in the U.S. is composed of a variety of institutions — some related, but many individual — that provide education beyond the high school level.

Major sectors of American higher education are:

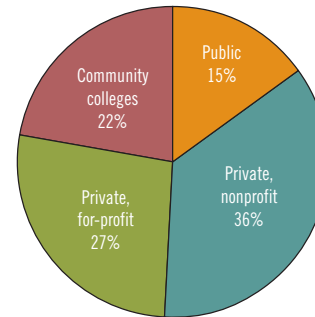
- *private, nonprofit (also called independent) colleges and universities* — the subject of this publication;
- *public, or state, colleges and universities*, typically funded to varying degrees by their state, and administered most often through a state system of higher education;
- *community colleges*, funded largely by their local and state jurisdiction, and offering career training, two-year associate’s degree programs, and the first two years of bachelor’s degree programs (though some also offer four-year degree programs); and
- *proprietary, or for-profit, schools*, that often specialize in career and job-related training and generate profits for their owners.

Though “independent” is less commonly used to describe the diverse set of private, nonprofit higher education institutions, it’s a term that does capture what distinguishes them from institutions in other sectors. Each operates independently in serving its unique

mission as defined by its founders and its present leadership. Many private, nonprofit colleges and universities affiliate with subsets of like-minded or similarly located institutions — Jesuit colleges, women’s colleges, and the colleges in Appalachia, for example. Still, each of these very independent institutions, governed by its own board of directors or trustees, remains as distinctive as a fingerprint.

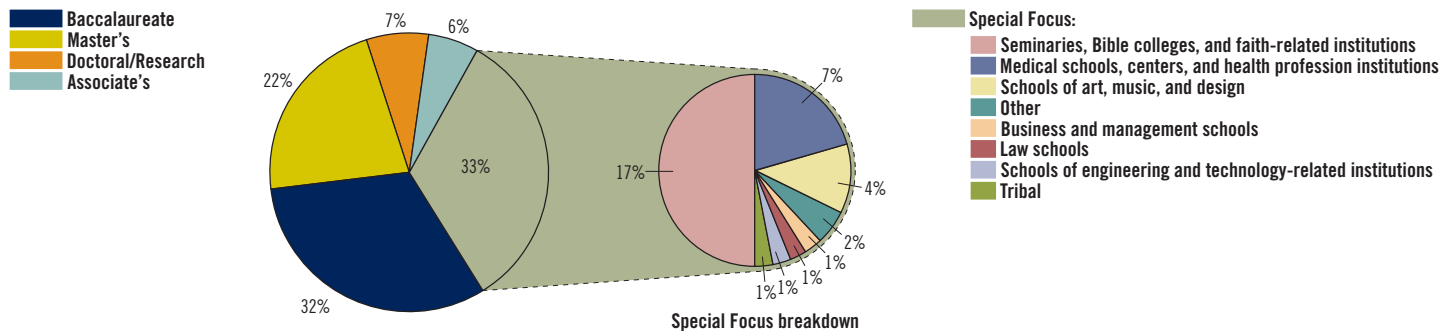
Since 1976, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) has served as the unified voice of the nation’s private, nonprofit colleges and universities.

### Postsecondary education defined



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Institutional Characteristics Header Component, 2009. Includes U.S., Title IV, degree-granting institutions only. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

### The diversity of private, nonprofit colleges



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Institutional Characteristics Component, 2009. Analysis by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. Percentages may not total correctly due to rounding.



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