



SNAPSHOT

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M.J. Foster Program Participation and Demographics

Thousands of Louisiana Residents Access Student Financial Aid Program

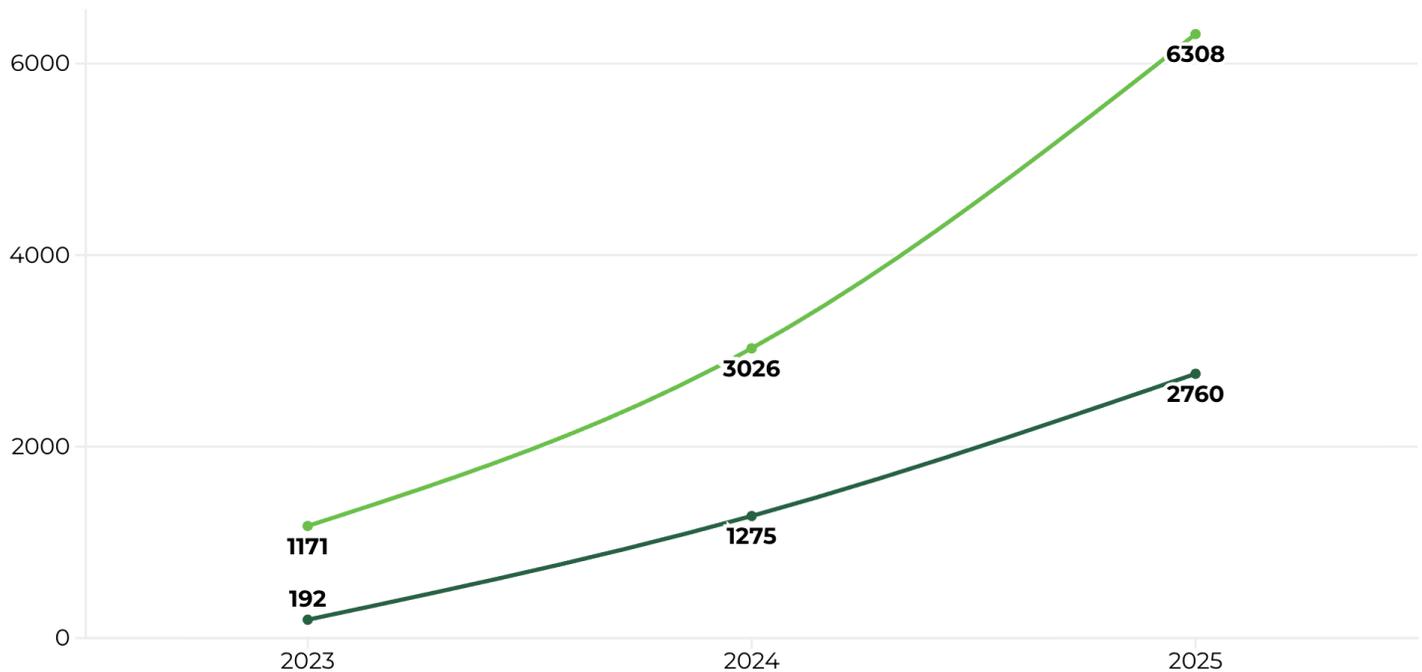
Across its first three years, more than 10,500 people in Louisiana have received aid through the state-financed M.J. Foster Promise Program to help them access workforce education and training aimed at getting residents into high-demand, high-wage jobs.

Lawmakers created the program in 2021, seeking to give more opportunities to Louisiana adults who have no postsecondary credentials. It was named after former Gov. Mike J. Foster, and the first students gained access to financial aid through the program in the 2022-23 school year.

The program has been expanded since then.

Program Recipients and Graduates Across First Three Years

■ Recipients ■ Graduates



Source: Louisiana Board of Regents

Students can use the assistance to seek an associate's degree or short-term postsecondary credential from a list of [approved programs](#), which cover the five high-demand industries of

construction, health care, information technology, manufacturing and transportation. They can receive a maximum of \$1,600 in aid per semester depending on their costs and a total up to \$6,400 over three years.

[According to the Louisiana Board of Regents](#), to participate in the program, applicants must be a Louisiana resident and reach a certain age threshold (19 years old for the 2025-2026 school year, 18 years old for the 2026-2027 school year and 17 years old for the 2027-2028 year and thereafter.) They cannot have a family income that exceeds 300% of the federal poverty level, \$99,000 for a family of four. And they cannot be unemployed or underemployed for six months.

The program's popularity is growing, according to data from the Board of Regents.

As of July 2025, 6,308 students have received funds through the M.J. Foster Promise Program for the 2024-25 academic year, the last year for which information is available. That more than doubled from the previous year's 3,026 recipients.

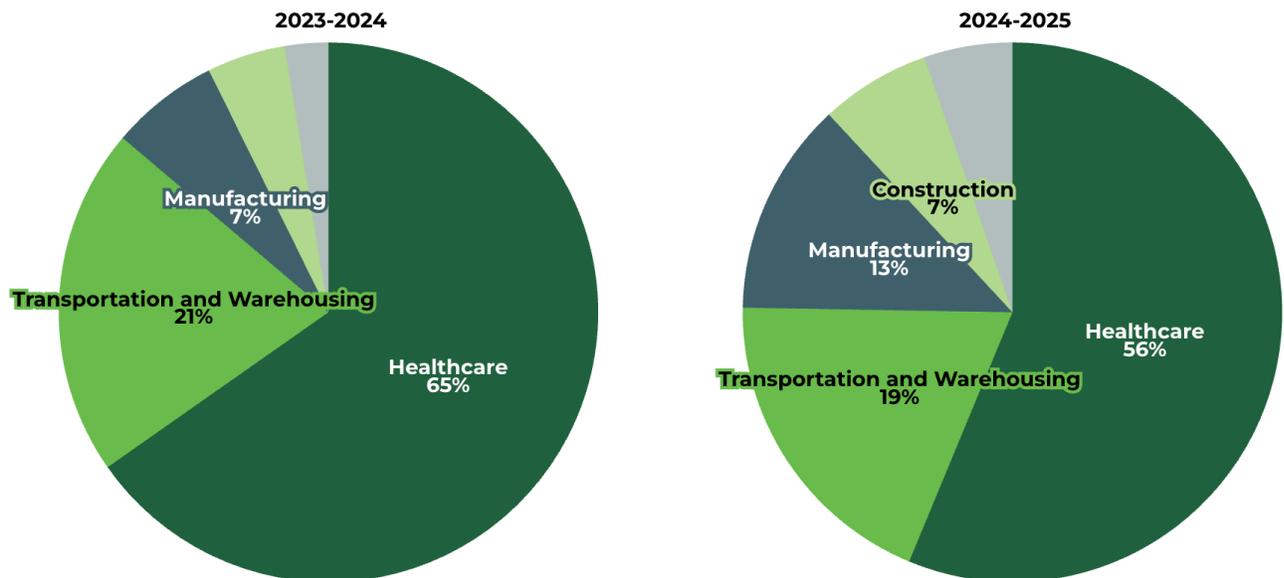
As the number of recipients has grown, so has the number of people completing their course of study. In the program's third year, 2,760 students received 3,900 credentials, according to the Regents data.

Demand for M.J. Foster Promise Program funding has grown as applicant interest increased.

During the creation of the program, the Legislature established a \$10.5 million annual state fund for participants. After the first year of the program, \$7.3 million remained unused and was rolled over to the next year. A year later, more than \$9.9 million was awarded to participants. By the third year, spending on the program reached \$17.4 million.

Completions by Industry

■ Healthcare ■ Transportation and Warehousing ■ Manufacturing ■ Construction ■ Information Technology



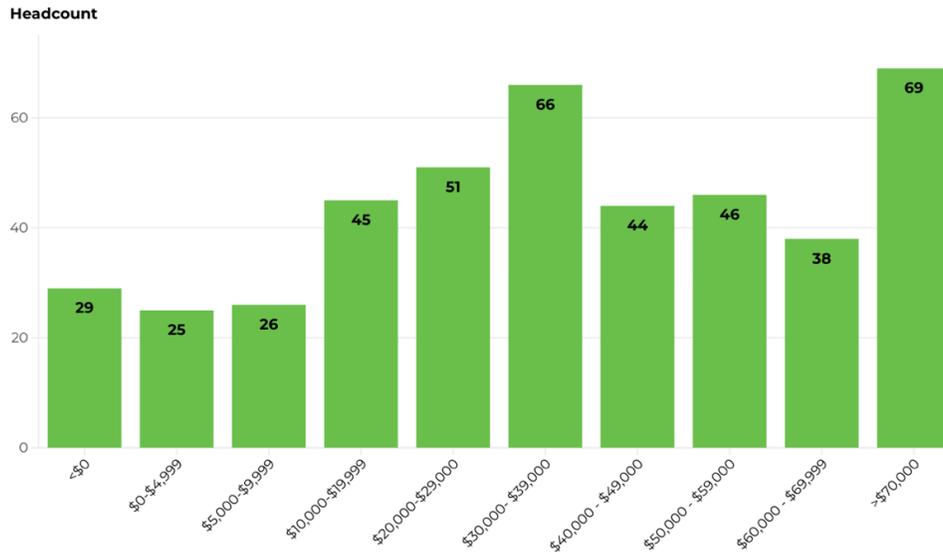
Source: Louisiana Board of Regents

Health care is the top sector for M.J. Foster Program recipients who completed their course of study, representing a 65% share of the total number of completers in 2023-24 and a 56% share in 2024-25. That was followed by the transportation and warehousing industry.

Between the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years, the information technology sector had the largest growth, skyrocketing from 39 to 208 completions. Credentials awarded in manufacturing followed closely behind, seeing an increase from 96 to 500.

The information technology sector includes programs like computer programming, general data analytics and cyber forensics, while the manufacturing sector includes computer, civil and audio engineering.

Change in Salary After Completion, 2022-23 & 2023-24



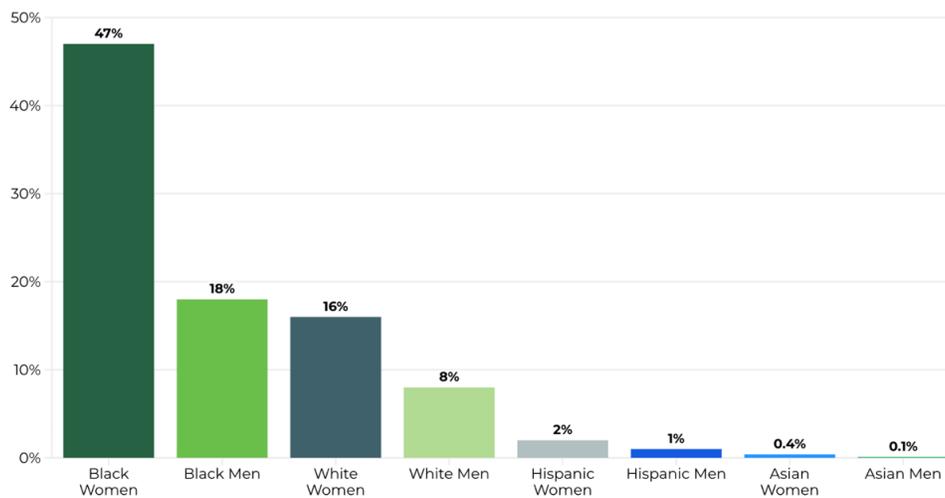
Source: Louisiana Board of Regents

Participation in the M.J. Foster Promise program can raise wages dramatically.

For those who completed a degree or credential program and reported wage data, the Board of Regents found that participants had an average pre-program salary of \$24,624 and an average post-program completion salary of \$65,698, a salary increase of 167%.

The analysis included data from 439 total completers from the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years and showed nearly 16% saw a salary increase of more than \$70,000, while nearly 27% of completers saw a salary increase between \$20,000 and \$39,000.

Program Completers by Race & Gender, 2024-2025

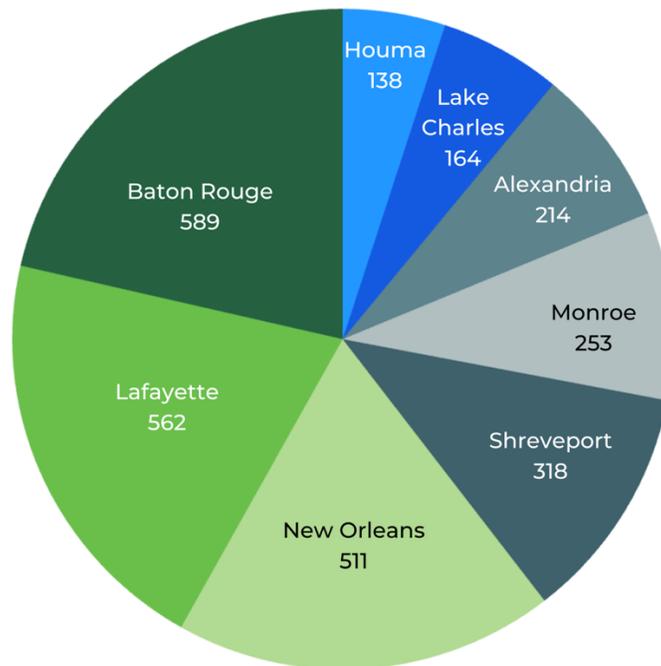


Source: Louisiana Board of Regents

Black women outpaced all other demographic categories in completing the M.J. Foster Promise Program in the 2024-25 year, according to the data.

While women made up 70% of the program's completions, Black women made up 47% of the overall total. The second closest category was Black men, who made up 18% of the total and White women at 16%.

Regional Labor Market Areas for Program Completers, 2024-2025



Source: Louisiana Board of Regents

The most recent class of completers for the M.J. Foster Promise Program established themselves throughout all regions in Louisiana. The largest regions where completers found work were in Baton Rouge, Lafayette and New Orleans – at 21%, 20% and 19% respectively.

Locations like Alexandria, Houma and Lake Charles made up the lowest portion – each at 6%.

As lawmakers have continued to expand program eligibility, higher demand for the financial aid is expected.

With recent [underemployment rates settling at 7.9%](#) and some of the [fastest growing sectors in the state](#) including healthcare, transportation and manufacturing – the M.J. Foster Promise Program will continue to help fill those gaps and offer opportunities for Louisiana residents.