



Upside Down: Higher Education School Finance in Virginia



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Big Picture: Virginia State Higher Ed Finance

1. High Levels of Higher Ed School Finance Inequity Among Public Colleges
2. State Financial Aid Directed to the Wealthy Families and Dubious Private Colleges
3. Exceptionally Low State Investment in Public Higher Ed Compared to Other States
4. High Net Price for Poor Students & Rising Student Debt Levels

No Transparent, Systematic State Formula for Equitably Distributing Funds Within Sectors of Higher Ed

Wealthy, public colleges like **William & Mary** receive **more state funding** per student **than** Old Dominion and **George Mason**, which serve a much more racially and socioeconomically diverse student body.

State Appropriations per FTE for 4-Year Public Universities (2019) and 3 year average Pell enrollment share (2018)

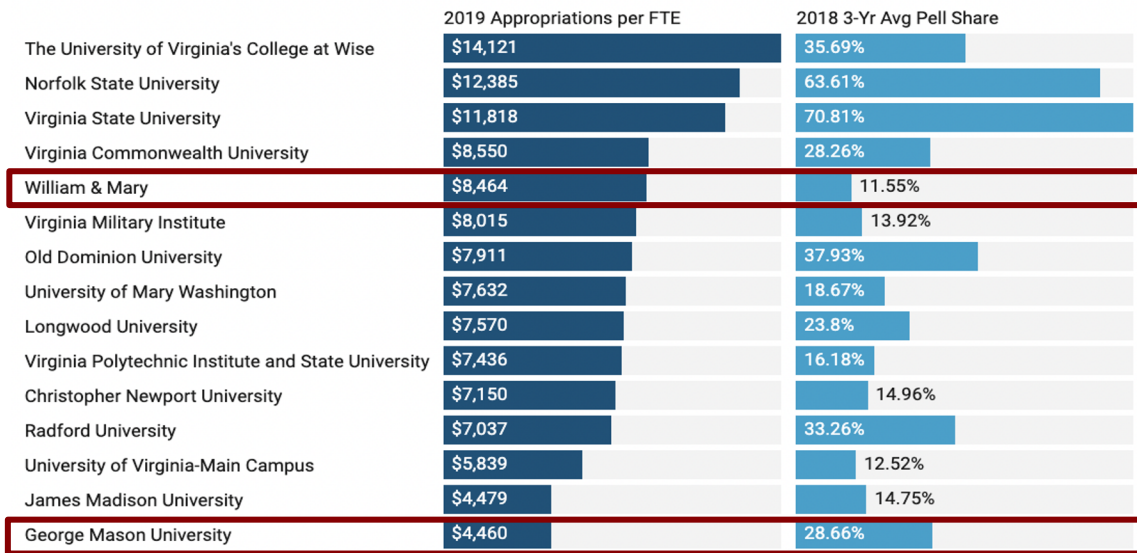


Chart: ERN • Source: IPEDS • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

High Levels of Higher Ed School Finance Inequity When Comparing Support to Two-Year vs. Four-Year Colleges

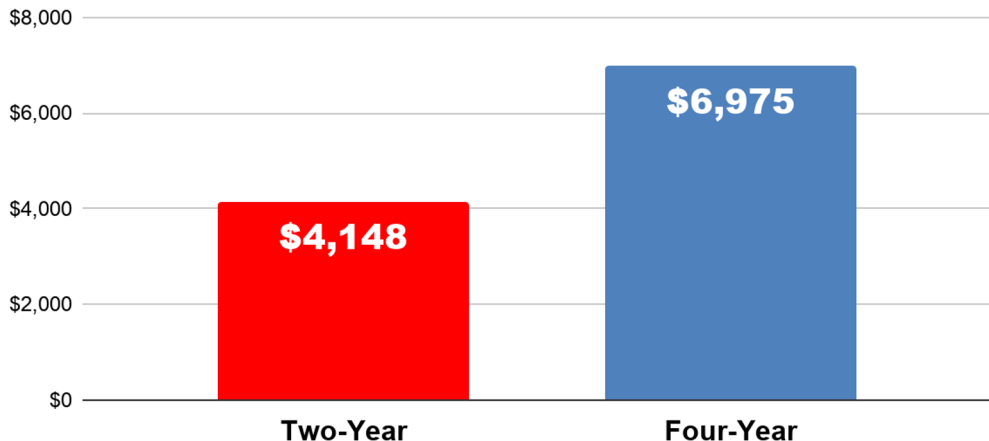
Virginia spends **68% more** per pupil on those attending **four-year colleges** than on those attending two-year community colleges.

EVEN THOUGH

Community colleges have less institutional wealth and serve students with much **greater financial and academic need**.

Average State Appropriation per Full Time Equivalent Enrollment (2019)

Source: Analysis of IPEDS data using weighted averages



Extreme Higher Ed Finance Inequities When Comparing State Funding to Individual Colleges Per Pupil

Institution Name	State Appropriation per FTE Student (2019)	Pell Enrollment (2018)	Black Enrollment (2019)
William & Mary	\$ 8,464	11.7%	7.2%
Virginia Military Institute	\$ 8,015	14.5%	6.2%
Lord Fairfax Community College	\$ 3,988	20.6%	4.1%
Piedmont Virginia Community College	\$ 4,505	22.0%	12.5%
Tidewater Community College	\$ 3,677	39.0%	31.0%

Approximately **\$10 million** in Virginia Tuition Assistance Grants go to Families with **Zero** Demonstrated **Financial Need *and* Zero** Indication of Academic Merit

Financial Aid Status of Students Who Received VTAG (2018)

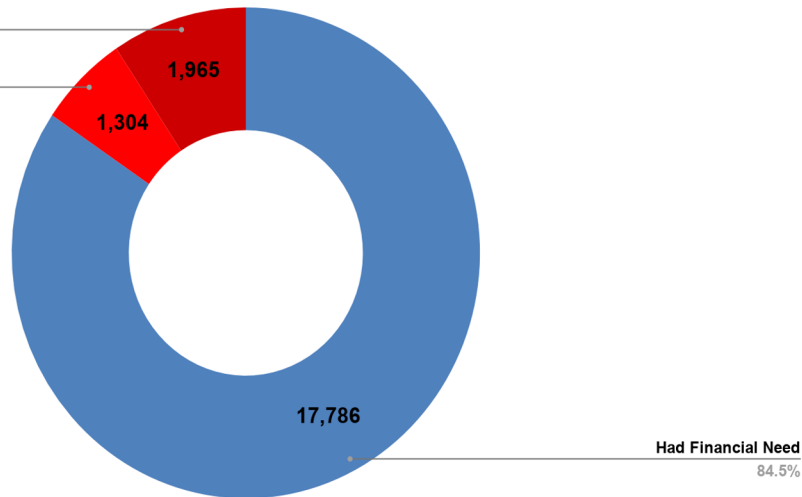
Source: VA DOE (2018). Financial Need is determined by a Federal Formula that Subtracts the Expected Family Contribution from the Cost of Attendance.

Did Not Apply for Federal Financial Aid

9.3%

Had No Financial Need

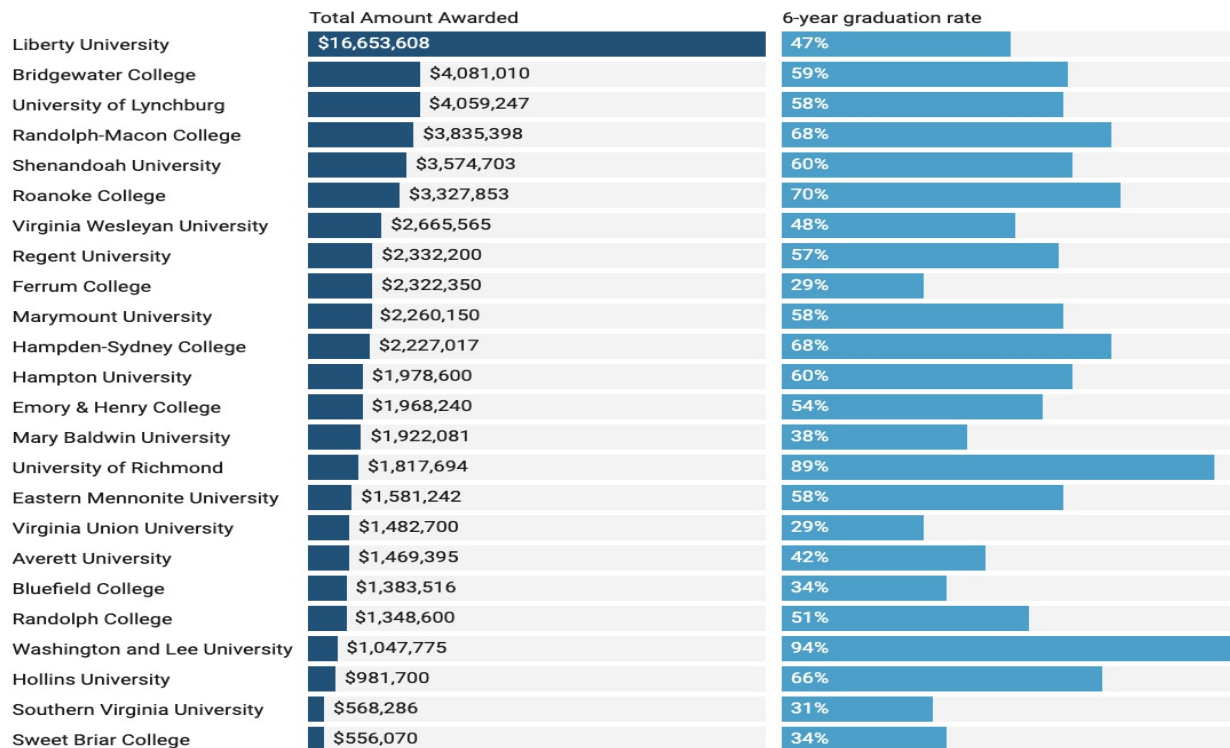
6.2%



Liberty University is the Largest Recipient of VTAG Funding by a Factor of Four (25 Percent of all Funds).

Liberty University alone received almost \$17 million in VTAG funds in 2019 despite having a **Black student graduation rate of just 17%.**

VTAG Funds Received by Virginia Private Four Year Institutions (2019) and 6-year Graduation Rate (2019)



Inequity and Inefficiency within one of Virginia's Main Student Grant Aid Programs

\$70 Million a Year VTAG Program for Students Attending Private Colleges

A greater share of VTAG funding goes to wealthy families with more than \$100,000 in income than hard-pressed, middle-income families with between \$50,000 and \$100,000 in income.

Distribution of VA Tuition Assistance Grants by Income

Source: VA DOE, SCHEV FA01 Report, 2018-19

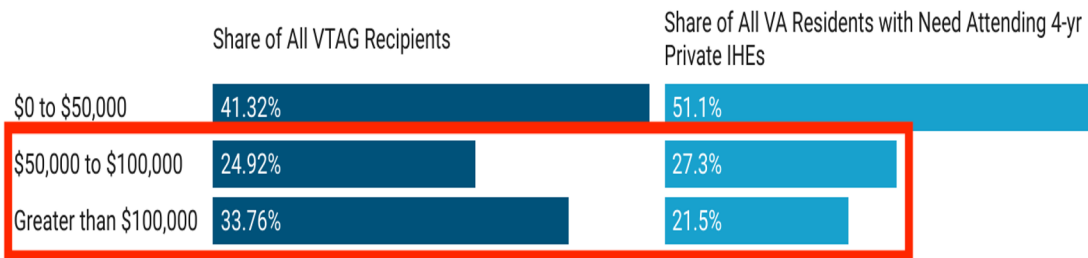


Chart: ERN • Created with Datawrapper

Virginia Has Been Slowly Privatizing its Public Higher Education System

There have been increases in higher ed funding overall under Govs. Northam & McAuliffe, but as 2020 Virginia still ranked **44th in state funding** for community colleges per full-time equivalent student.

Public Higher Education Appropriations Per FTE by State at Two-Year Institutions, FY 2020

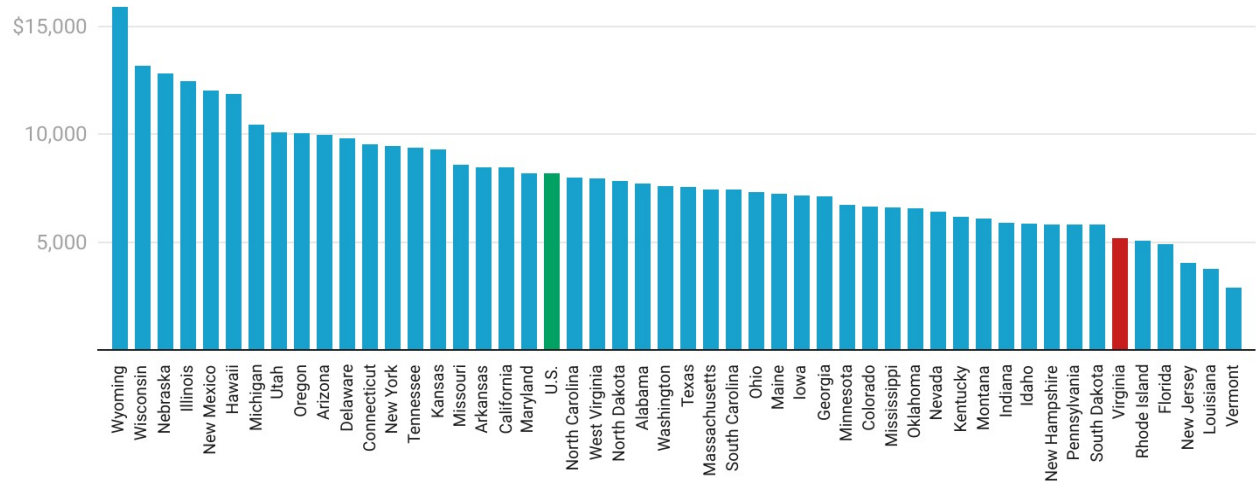


Chart: ERN • Source: SHEEO State Higher Education Finance • Created with Datawrapper

The Cost of Public College Attendance Has Been Passed on to Students and Families

Virginia's Rank Among All States on In-State Undergraduate Student Tuition & Fees at Public Institutions

Institution Category	1989-90	1993-94	2000-01	2009-10	2018-19	2019-20	Estimated 2020-21
Comprehensive Four-year Institutions	3rd	3rd	6th	10th	3rd	3rd	3rd
Doctoral/Research Institutions	5th	8th	19th	16th	7th	7th	7th

Virginia's Public Colleges Have **High Net Prices for Low-Income Students** as Compared to Peer Institutions

Net Price is the amount families pay out-of-pocket after all grant and scholarship aid

Net Price for Low-Income Students

Average net price (income 0-\$30,000)

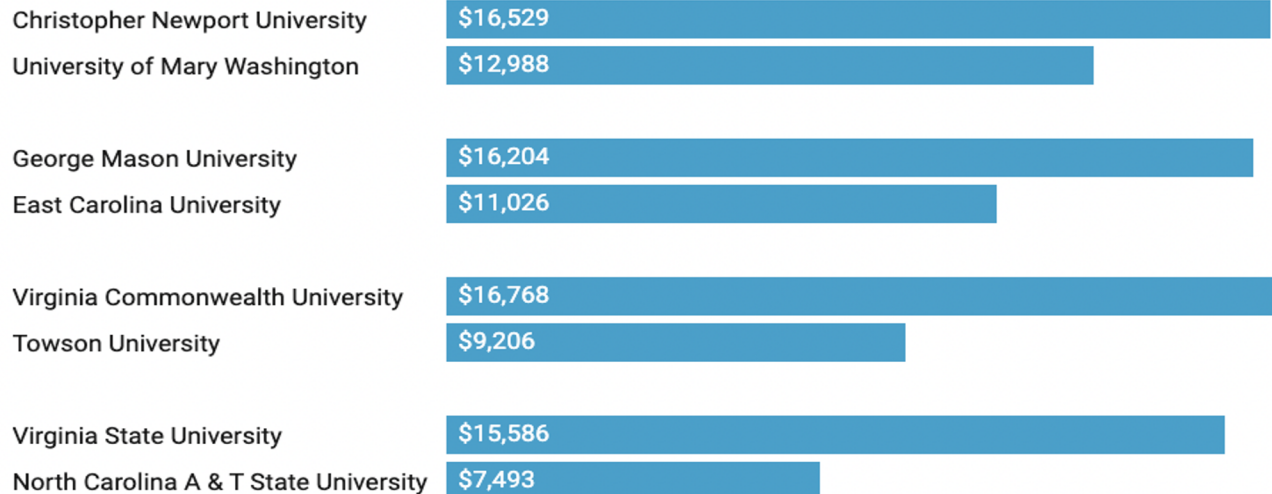
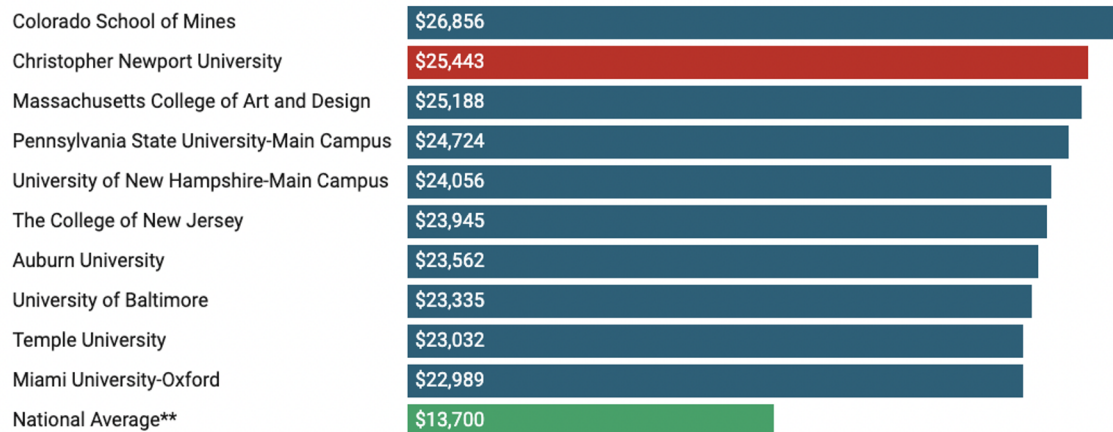


Chart: ERN • Source: IPEDS (2018-19) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Among Public Colleges, Christopher Newport University has the Second Highest Average Net Price in the Nation

Christopher Newport combines high net price and perhaps not unrelated an extraordinarily low level of low-income students enrolled (7th worst in the nation among public colleges).

The 10 Highest Net Prices at 4-Year Public Colleges and Universities (2018)*



**Three public institutions identified in IPEDS with the highest net prices were left off this list because two of them, according to College Scorecard, are primarily 2-year institutions and the other has only been a public institution for one year. **National average for 2017 from NCES*

Chart: ERN • Source: IPEDS, NCES • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

UVa and William & Mary Compare Unfavorably to Peer Institutions on Net Price for Low-Income Students

Average Net Price for Low-Income and Working Class Students

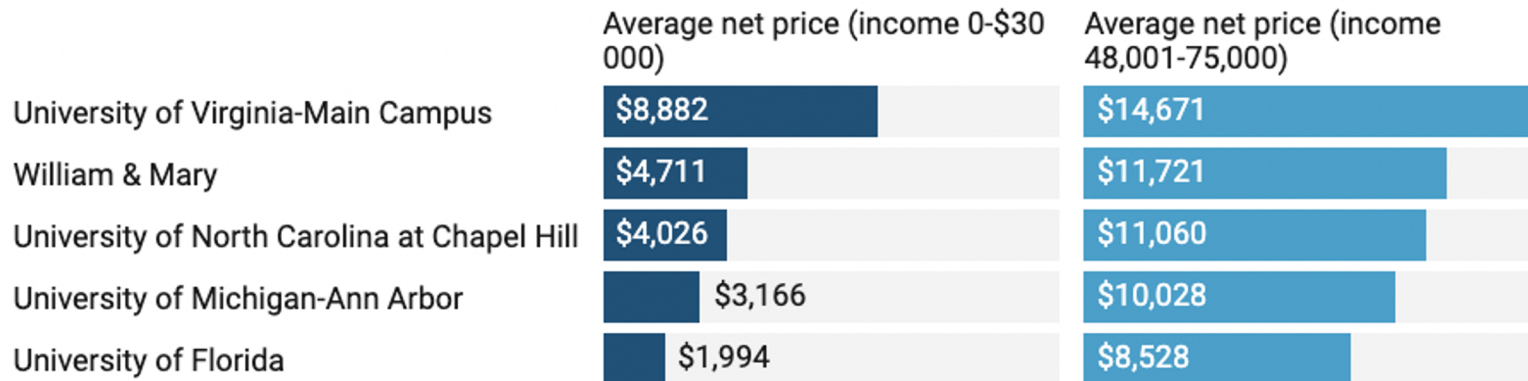
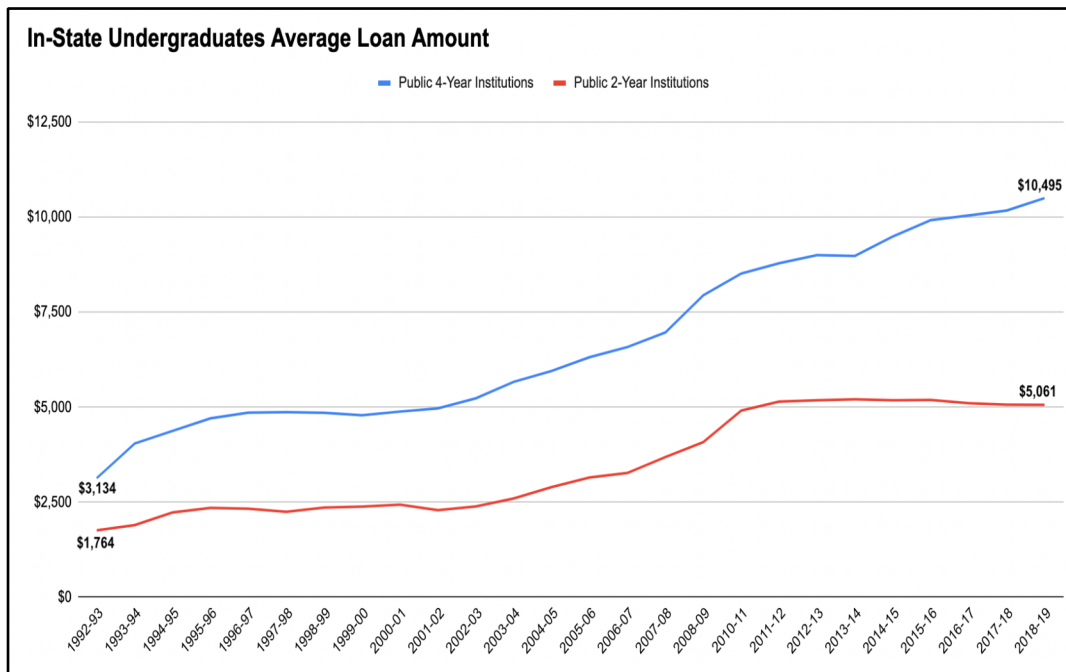


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More College Students in Virginia Have to Borrow to Pay for College and They're Borrowing More Than Ever

Over the last 30 years, the percentage of those borrowing to attend Virginia two-year community colleges has increased by more than five times.



Vast Differences in Percentage of Students who Graduate from Virginia's Public Colleges with Debt & in How Much They Owe

Student Debt at Virginia 4-year Public Universities (2018)

All data are for graduates of 4-year Bachelor's degree programs.

A quarter of borrowers at Longwood University and Christopher Newport are leaving with *an average* of \$65,000 and \$73,000 in student loan debt.

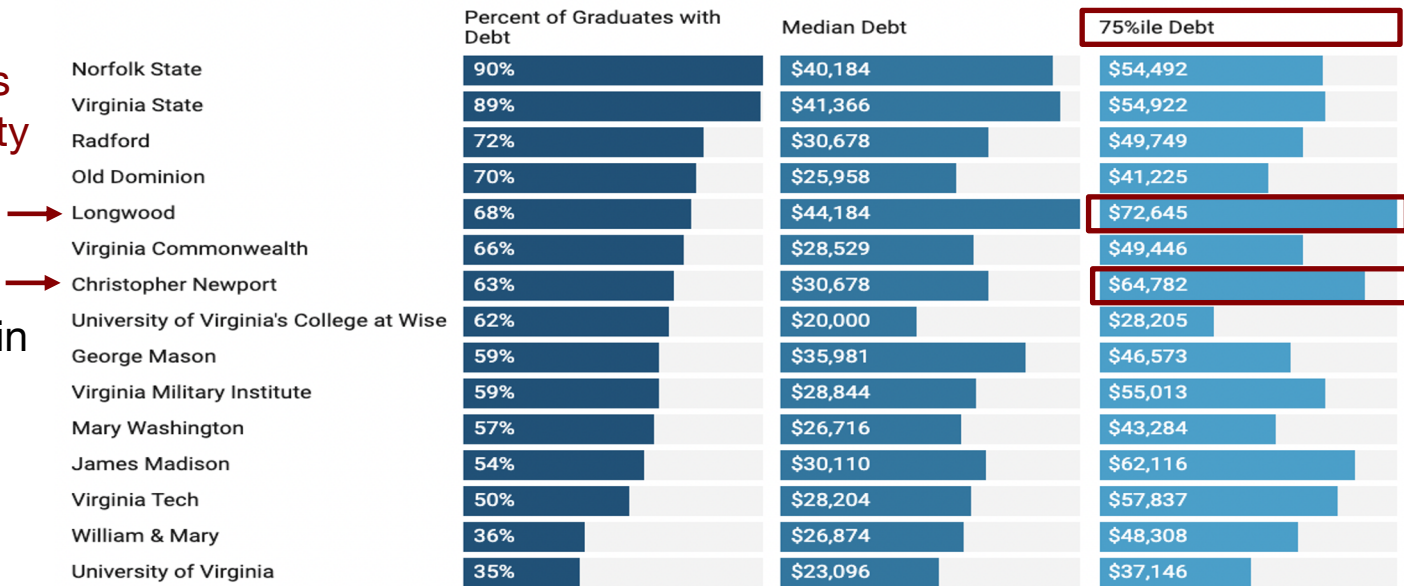


Chart: ERN • Source: SCHEV Table EOM 01T • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

The Size of Student Loan Debt for Black Students and at HBCUs is of Particular Concern

Almost every graduate from the state's two HBCUs, Norfolk State and Virginia State, leaves with debt, and a quarter of graduates **owed more than \$54,000 in 2018.**

Student Debt at Virginia HBCU's (2018)

All data are for graduates of 4-year Bachelor's degree programs.

	Percent of Graduates with Debt	Median Debt	75%ile Debt
Norfolk State	90%	\$40184	\$54492
Virginia State	89%	\$41366	\$54922

Chart: ERN • Source: SCHEV Table EOM 01T • Created with Datawrapper

Student Loan Debt at Public Two- and Four-year Colleges is *Worsening* Racial Inequity

	Overall	Attained Bachelor's Degree	Attained Associate Degree	Attained Certificate	No Degree, Still Enrolled	Dropped Out
White	21%	6%	17%	40%	23%	38%
Black/African American	49%	23%	33%	54%	46%	65%
Hispanic/Latino	36%	14%	21%	51%	30%	48%
Overall	29%	9%	22%	46%	29%	46%

Review of Findings

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More Information on or Recommendations for Virginia Higher Education?

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