

GICA in Brief

Supporting Higher Education in Georgia
Updated January 2012

GICA Member Institutions

Agnes Scott College
Andrew College
Berry College
Brenau University
Brewton-Parker College
Clark Atlanta University
Covenant College
Emmanuel College
Georgia Military College
LaGrange College
Mercer University
Morehouse College
Oglethorpe University
Paine College
Piedmont College
Point University
Reinhardt University
Savannah College of Art
and Design
Shorter University
Spelman College
Thomas University
Toccoa Falls College
Truett-McConnell College
Wesleyan College
Young Harris College



Overview

GICA membership includes 25 degree-granting institutions whose focus is to provide excellent education that meets the individual needs of Georgia's students.

Who Attends a Georgia Independent College?

Almost 71,000 students are enrolled in GICA member institutions. 11,222 attend one of our two associates degree granting institutions and 47,299 are undergraduates enrolled in our four-year colleges and universities. In addition, 12,125 are enrolled as graduate students. **GICA institutions currently enroll about 15% of undergraduate college students in Georgia** attending not-for-profit public and private four-year colleges.

Most of our students (59%) identify as non-white. Approximately 37% of students at GICA institutions are Black or African American, while 3% identify as Hispanic. Almost half of our students who apply for aid come from homes with average family incomes of less than \$60,000. GICA institutions also educate many of Georgia's adult learners.

Approximately one quarter of students at our member colleges and universities are over the age of 25. Students who attend independent schools choose diverse disciplines with many graduating in key fields such as STEM disciplines, the health professions, arts, education, and business.

Students attending the independent institutions in Georgia come from near and far. **Approximately 59% of students are in-state.** And while serving the needs of Georgia residents, independent colleges generate substantial revenue from students in near-by states which benefits local and state economies.



Georgia Independent Colleges are Successful

Students attending a GICA institution are much more likely to graduate in four years compared to their public university counterparts. In fact, **the four-year graduation rate at Georgia private, not-for-profit colleges is 41% compared to 22% at the State's public colleges and universities. The five-year graduation rate for the Georgia public colleges is 49%.** This shows that students who work hard in a private college may actually pay less than public college students who take longer to graduate. While the out-of-pocket costs of tuition may be slightly higher per year at a private college, the total cost may be less than at a public college when the entire career is factored.

In addition, according to the Office of Default Management and the US Department of Education, GICA member institutions have the lowest loan default rates when compared to Georgia 4-year public institutions and Georgia 4-year proprietary institutions. Students who attend GICA colleges and universities are less likely to default on their student loans.

GICA institutions **enroll 16% of Georgia's undergraduates, yet award 19% of all undergraduate degrees** awarded in the state.

Tuition and Fees

While tuition and fees at independent colleges seem more expensive than those at state public institutions, the actual price paid by students is significantly less than published.

In addition, **the cost of attending an independent college or university fluctuates less than public tuition**, meaning the cost from year-to-year remains relatively the same compared to the cost of attending a public college.

Financial Aid

Nearly all students (90%) who attend a GICA member institution receive financial aid. The majority of the aid comes from institutional grant aid provided by the college or university and does not require repayment. **The average student receives more than \$10,535 in institutional grant aid** at a GICA member institution.

Nearly half of students attending GICA colleges and universities receive Pell Grants. The average Pell Grant amount is around \$4,000.

Economic Impact

The total economic impact of Georgia independent colleges and universities is \$6.26 billion. This includes approximately \$4.05 billion in spending by the institutions and their students and \$2.21 billion in indirect or induced spending in the regional communities. More than 57,000 Georgia jobs are supported by the independent college sector and expenditures by its students.

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