



**IowaCollegeAid.gov**  
Because College Changes Everything

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**Iowans overestimate student loan debt, survey finds**  
**Families, students expect to borrow more than average for higher education**

A survey of Iowa State Fairgoers suggests that students and families overestimate the debt associated with college, likely planning for the worst when preparing for the financial impact of higher education.

Overall, 58 percent of those surveyed expect student debt from earning a college degree to top \$35,000. That number is 30 percent higher than the average student debt for Iowa public university graduates (just over \$27,000) and 10 percent higher than the average debt for graduates of private, not-for-profit colleges and universities in Iowa (\$31,806). The number was two and a half times the average debt for graduates of Iowa's community colleges (just over \$14,000).

The survey was taken by Iowa College Aid, the state agency administering state grants and scholarships for students continuing their education after high school as well as helping families prepare, plan and pay for college. At the fair, Iowa College Aid looked to both gauge the public's ideas on student loan debt and help shine a light on areas where perception and reality differ.

"We know that more than half of Iowans who never enroll in postsecondary education cite cost as the reason," said Karen Misjak, Iowa College Aid executive director. "That means an unrealistic expectation of student loan debt could hinder Iowa's efforts to increase the number of residents who pursue higher education."

For more information about planning and paying for college, visit [IowaCollegeAid.gov](http://IowaCollegeAid.gov).

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