

## **Macomb Community College launches tuition-free program**

Macomb Tuition Advantage puts earning a college credential within the financial reach of many more people

Macomb Community College is removing financial barriers to earning a degree with the introduction of Macomb Tuition Advantage, which will provide free tuition to Macomb students with family incomes of \$70,000 or less. The program is open to those already attending Macomb or those who plan to start at the college in Fall 2023 and are pursuing an associate degree program.

“Earning a college credential remains a key factor in sustainable employment and earnings,” said James O. Sawyer IV, president, Macomb Community College. “Macomb Community College is committed to ensuring the transformative power of education is within the financial reach of all – regardless of year of high school graduation, previous attempts at attending college or current residency.”

The median household income in Macomb County is \$67,828. While affordability is a top priority for the college, with Macomb’s tuition rate one of the lowest of the state’s 31 community colleges, cost is still a barrier for some. Nearly 42% of the college’s current students receive some form of financial aid and 28% receive Pell Grants, which are federal aid awards to those who display exceptional financial need. Approximately half of Macomb’s nearly 15,000 current students would have qualified under the financial requirements for the new program.

To be eligible for Macomb Tuition Advantage, an individual’s annual family income must be \$70,000 or less, with assets of \$50,000 or less; be a registered student at Macomb; and have completed the FAFSA. Any federal and state grants the student is eligible for will be applied first, with Macomb’s program covering the remainder of tuition and fees owed. Students in the program must be enrolled full time (minimum of 12 credit hours per semester) and maintain a 2.0 grade point average. The program is renewable for up to three academic years.

To date, nearly 8,900 students have pursued an associate degree from Macomb through two state tuition-free programs, Futures for Frontliners and Michigan Reconnect. The state has also introduced a new program for 2023 high school graduates, the Michigan Achievement Scholarship, that will provide up to \$2,750 annually for students to attend a community college beginning Fall 2023.

“We have seen programs that take tuition and fees out of the equation for prospective students, such as Michigan Reconnect, are a real game-changer for many members of our community,” said Sawyer. “Macomb Tuition Advantage is building on this proven approach and taking it a step further by broadening access to critical financial support to those who need it. The program supports the college’s commitment to fostering student success and degree completion, providing the financial means so students can focus on steady progress through their program, and encourages a college-going culture to support the long-term vitality and prosperity of our community.”

Macomb Tuition Advantage also supports the Sixty by 30 initiative of Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, which is working to increase the number of working-age adults with a skill certificate or college degree from 50.5% to 60% by 2030. The underlying goals of Sixty by 30 are to increase opportunity and access to education and skills that lead to family sustaining jobs and wages, close the skills gap to sustain and grow business and industry, and make the state more competitive for inclusive economic growth.

For complete eligibility requirements for Macomb Tuition Advantage and more information, go to <https://www.macomb.edu/admissions-aid/paying-for-college/macomb-tuition-advantage.html>.

### **About Macomb Community College**

Macomb Community College ([www.macomb.edu](http://www.macomb.edu)) is about transforming lives and communities through the power of education, enrichment and economic development. Macomb grants the largest number of associate degrees in Michigan and is the largest community college in the state. The college provides programming for youth through seniors, including early college for high school students, university transfer and career preparation programs, workforce education, continuing education and certification, and a wide range of enrichment opportunities encompassing arts, culture and lifelong learning.