



THE INSTITUTE FOR COLLEGE
ACCESS & SUCCESS

Dear Partners, Allies, & Colleagues,

2022 has been an extraordinary year for higher education, delivering substantial progress on many of our longstanding policy priorities. This year brought much-needed but long-delayed relief to millions of students and borrowers. It also brought progress toward delivering more fully on the promise of an affordable, equitable college system that is free from fraud and abuse.

Moreover, 2022 has been a year of reinvention for TICAS. We've added new ideas and expertise to the team while maintaining our laser focus on helping students and borrowers. TICAS began its Project on Student Debt in 2004 as student borrowing soared, but media coverage and policymaker attention lagged. From being one of the few organizations focused on higher education policy to a thriving space of partner organizations, the big problem remains: too many students must borrow too much to get to and through college.

Given the many developments of 2022 for student debt policy, we are not publishing an update to the Student Debt Report this year. We will continue to advance racial and economic justice through our ambitious higher education policy research and advocacy agenda.

In 2023 we will continue our longstanding work and redouble our commitment to ensuring a more accessible, high-quality, and affordable higher education for the next generation.

Celebrating 2022

This past year, TICAS saw the culmination of years of work alongside peers, allies, and coalition partners. We celebrated the [Pell Grant's 50th anniversary](#), welcomed a \$400 increase to its maximum award that put millions of dollars in the pockets of students, and applauded President Biden's call for [doubling the Pell Grant](#).

With our Protect Students and Taxpayers Coalition partners, we [supported](#) student and borrower advocates through [negotiated rulemaking](#), and helped secure [long-awaited relief](#) for more than one million borrowers whose colleges defrauded them.

Congress approved a first-of-its-kind College Completion Fund to get more students the help they need to get across the college finish line. I'm proud of TICAS' leadership in advocating for this fund with partners in the [Comprehensive Approaches to Student Success](#) community of practice.

In California, our team helped [shed light](#) on the costs imposed on students by remedial coursework. Alongside the Californians for College Affordability coalition, which grew to 37 members this year, we [continued](#) working to expand and strengthen the Cal Grant. Lastly, we remained committed to [data transparency](#) and [college accountability](#) through our work on the Cradle-to-Career Data System and the [reauthorization](#) of the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE).

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In Michigan, TICAS worked with Governor Gretchen Whitmer's administration, policymakers, and coalition partners to streamline and improve existing student financial aid programs, as well as the state's massive investment in the new [Michigan Achievement Scholarship](#), so that students won't have to jump through hoops to [get the aid they need](#) and deserve.

To better target resources and understand the needs of students from low-income backgrounds, we released a [four-part research series](#) on access and completion trends of Pell Grant recipients. Though we faced [challenges](#) in advancing racial equity in higher education, we laid the groundwork for a research agenda that explicitly centers race and equity for years to come.

Additionally, the Biden-Harris administration announced critical changes to [ease the burden of student debt](#), including TICAS recommendations to provide account adjustments to borrowers who were steered into forbearance, [providing a fresh start to borrowers who were in default when the COVID-19 pandemic began](#), easing access to bankruptcy protection, and lowering monthly loan payments for borrowers in income-driven repayment. While monthly student loan payments remain on hold and plans to cancel up to \$20,000 in student debt remains in the courts, the Administration has delivered on key promises to address the burden of student debt for the over 40 million Americans carrying it.

...And ready for 2023

Though we are heartened by the progress we have made together over the past year, we are mindful that we remain at a critical juncture for higher education and significant challenges lie ahead for 2023 and beyond.

Students deserve a [path to debt-free college](#) built on a federal-state partnership that leverages the strengths and resources of each to reduce reliance on debt to get through college.

Students deserve a higher education system that supports their basic needs, accounting for their full cost of attendance, beyond tuition and books. We will advocate for improved access to programs like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF), and [federal childcare](#) and housing programs.

Students deserve access to evidence-based supports that increase their odds of [completing](#) their degree.

Students deserve to know [clearly](#) and as early as possible how much they will need to save, earn or borrow after grant aid in order to enroll in and complete college.

Students [deserve](#) a higher education system that is free of fraud and free of career programs that create debt and leave students worse off than if they had never attended at all.

Students deserve [robust](#) and equitable state financial aid programs that increase educational attainment and reduce costs.

Students deserve a higher education system that helps close [racial](#) and economic gaps in educational attainment and promotes socio-economic mobility in the United States.

That's the higher education system TICAS will work to build in 2023 and beyond.

TICAS charges ahead

As 2022 ends, I'm incredibly proud of the TICAS team, while remaining clear-eyed about the work that remains. TICAS is ready to advocate fiercely for students – to make sure that college is affordable for the next generation, to get rising costs and debt under control, and to protect students from fraud.

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As president, I'm excited to continue leading a team dedicated to closing racial and economic equity gaps in higher education, a team with deep expertise and an authentic voice, grounded in our own range of experiences of receiving student aid, relying on public benefits, navigating the impact of system racism and generational wealth gaps, and raising children while enrolled in college.

I cannot wait to share our continued work with you in 2023. Thank you for making it possible – as a funder, as a peer advocate, as a student advocate, and as someone in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sameer Gadkaree', written in a cursive style.

Sameer Gadkaree
President & CEO
The Institute for College Access & Success