

Student Success Stipends Pilot Supports Community College Students in Omaha

Direct cash initiative provides MCC students with flexible financial support to stay enrolled, complete their education, and transition into the workforce

OMAHA, NE — Today, the Solid Ground Project launched the Student Success Stipends pilot at Metropolitan Community College (MCC) in Omaha, Nebraska. The three-year pilot will provide eligible MCC students with monthly cash stipends tailored to their individual financial profile and household size, giving students the financial breathing room they need to stay enrolled, complete their education, and move into good jobs. The launch builds on a growing national movement and the success of more than 230 pilots nationwide, demonstrating that putting predictable cash in people's hands helps them stay stable and build toward long-term opportunity.

“We have always believed in meeting students where they are and giving them the tools they need to succeed,” said **Tammy Green, Executive Director of Community and Workforce Education at Metropolitan Community College**. “What excites us most about this pilot is that it addresses the real barriers our students face every day. When a student does not have to choose between buying groceries and making it to class, they can focus on what brought them here in the first place: building a better future for themselves and their families.”

The pilot will serve 350 students and offer a student-specific monthly check for students until completion of their education (a range of one to three years). Eligible students must be 19 or older, enrolled in a credit or noncredit program at MCC, working toward a credential, certificate, or an associate degree, and either filing for the Earned Income Tax Credit within two years or have legal custody of a child aged five or younger. Stipend amounts are calculated based on the gap between a participant's current income, household size, housing status, and is measured against the Supplemental Poverty Measure threshold that accounts for the actual cost of living for their household. Rather than a one-size-fits-all model, this pilot is designed to reflect and support how students actually live. Students can use the support however they need most, whether that is covering groceries, transportation, housing, childcare, or other everyday costs that too often stand between them and their education.

“This pilot is about advancing opportunity, not just providing cash,” said **Richard Webb, President and CEO of Boys and Girls Clubs of the Midlands**. “This pilot gives people the stability they need to rise, to finish what they started, and to build a future for their families. When we invest in people at critical moments in their lives, the entire community benefits.”

This pilot addresses a critical transition period for community college students, who are often juggling work, caregiving, and coursework while working toward graduation and a stable career. According to the U.S. Department of Education, only 25% of full-time community college students nationwide graduate on time, with even lower rates among students of color and part-time learners. At MCC, where 70% of students attend part-time, the path to completing a degree can stretch to six or even eight years. Student Success Stipends are designed to change that by providing a financial bridge from education to employment.

Investing in MCC students is also investing in Omaha's economic future. When students complete their education and move into good careers, Nebraska's workforce grows stronger, families build stability, and communities benefit. Research shows that every \$1 invested in working families translates to around \$3 in local economic benefits, making this pilot a smart investment in Nebraska's workforce and communities.

New polling shows strong and broad public support for the Student Success Stipends pilot across Nebraska. Sixty percent of Nebraskans support cash stipends for community college students, a figure that rises to 63% when stipends are framed around helping second-year students transition into the workforce. Sixty-four percent of Nebraskans hold favorable views of community college students receiving cash stipends, and 61% say stipends would be effective in helping students maintain economic stability. The data also reflects support for the pilot's broader ripple effects: 65% of Nebraskans say stipends would better support the children of college students, and an equal 65% say they would support students' mental health and wellbeing. Taken together, the polling reflects a clear and consistent message from Nebraskans — targeted financial support for community college students is not just popular, it is seen as a practical investment in students, their families, and the state's future.

The Student Success Stipends pilot is a research pilot from the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Guaranteed Income Research (CGIR), which is running a Randomized Controlled Trial to measure outcomes including graduation rates, earnings, and dependence on public benefits, and calculate the potential return on investment to Nebraska. The pilot is part of the **Solid Ground Project**, made possible through the support of the Sherwood Foundation, and advanced in partnership with Economic Security Project.

For more information about the Student Success Stipends pilot, visit the Solid Ground Project website at **[LINK]**.

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About the Solid Ground Project

The Solid Ground Project is a community-rooted initiative providing direct cash support to working students and returning citizens in Nebraska, made possible through the support of the Sherwood Foundation. Learn more at [\[LINK\]](#)

About Metropolitan Community College

Metropolitan Community College is Nebraska's largest community college, serving the greater Omaha area across four counties since 1974. Learn more at mccneb.edu

About the Center for Guaranteed Income Research

The Center for Guaranteed Income Research at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy & Practice conducts research on guaranteed income programs across the United States. Learn more at <https://www.pennncgir.org/>

About Economic Security Project

Economic Security Project develops and advances ideas that build economic power for all Americans. Learn more at economicsecurityproject.org