



FUND

THE FUTURE NOW

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY TOOLKIT

OVERVIEW

The Fund the Future Now campaign is a youth-led advocacy initiative within the NAACP Youth & College Division aimed at advancing policies that make college free, affordable and accessible without lifelong debt burdens. The campaign builds on research conducted with Black youth and college students nationwide, demonstrating strong awareness of rising college costs and a desire for meaningful policy action.

By leveraging youth leadership, research-driven advocacy, and community mobilization, the campaign seeks to advance policies that reduce the cost of higher education, strengthen support for public HBCUs, and expand financial aid programs that allow students to pursue degrees without long-term debt.

Degrees Not Debt positions young people not only as beneficiaries of policy change, but as advocates shaping the future of education equity and economic opportunity.

CAMPAIGN THEORY OF CHANGE

If young people are trained and mobilized as advocates, and their voices are amplified through community engagement and digital storytelling, then policymakers will face pressure to enact and sustain policies that reduce college costs, expand financial aid, and strengthen support for HBCUs.

By translating research insights into actionable advocacy and providing clear pathways for youth participation, Degrees Not Debt will increase awareness, elevate public narratives around college affordability, and achieve tangible policy outcomes.

KEY MESSAGES (PLUG-AND-PLAY)

- College should be an investment in opportunity, not a lifetime of debt.
- Education is economic justice.
- Young people deserve degrees without debt.
- Our voices can shape policies that fund our future now.



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POWER FACTS

- College debt has increased 170% since 2006
- \$1.7 trillion in total student loan debt
- Nearly 60% of Black students rely on Pell Grants
- Pell Grants covered 75% of costs in the 1980s—now just 28%
- Tuition has risen over 45% at public colleges

HASHTAGS

Primary:

#FundTheFutureNow

#DegreesNotDebt

Secondary:

#CollegeAffordability

#EducationEquity

#CancelStudentDebt

#InvestInStudents

SIGN UP TO BECOME A EDUCATION CHAMPION!

Becoming an NAACP Education Champion means joining a powerful network of young leaders committed to transforming the future of higher education. As an Education Champion, you'll take action to advance policies that make college free, affordable, and accessible for all while helping amplify the voices and experiences of students directly impacted by rising costs and student debt. From engaging in advocacy with policymakers to organizing on your campus and in your community, you'll play a key role in pushing for real change. This is more than a sign-up it's an opportunity to lead, mobilize, and ensure that the next generation can pursue their dreams without the burden of lifelong debt.

CALL-TO-ACTIONS (CTA)

- Join the movement. Demand #DegreesNotDebt
- Tell your story. Use #DegreesNotDebt
- Contact your lawmakers and demand free college pathways
- Share this post and tag 3 friends who believe in education equity



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SAMPLE POSTS BY PLATFORM

INSTAGRAM (FEED)

Post 1: Awareness

The cost of college is out of control and it's impacting our future. \$1.7 trillion in student debt. Pell Grants covering less than ever. We deserve better. We deserve #DegreesNotDebt.

It's time to #FundTheFutureNow 🙌

🔄 Share & tag someone who believes college should be affordable

Post 2: Empowerment

College should open doors, not trap us in debt.

We are organizing. We are mobilizing. We are demanding change.

Because our futures are worth investing in.

#FundTheFutureNow

INSTAGRAM REEL / TIKTOK

Script Idea (15–30 sec):

- Clip 1: "How much debt do you think students graduate with?"
- Clip 2: "\$29,000 on average."
- Clip 3: "That's not opportunity—that's a burden."
- Clip 4: "We're fighting for #DegreesNotDebt"
- End screen: "Join us. #FundTheFutureNow"

X (TWITTER)

Tweet 1:

College costs are rising. Pell Grants are shrinking. Debt is exploding.

This isn't sustainable.

It's time for #DegreesNotDebt

#FundTheFutureNow

LINKEDIN

The rising cost of higher education is not just a financial issue—it's an economic justice issue.

Through the Fund the Future Now campaign, the NAACP Youth & College Division is mobilizing young leaders to advocate for policies that expand financial aid, support HBCUs, and reduce student debt burdens.

It's time to invest in students and ensure that higher education remains a pathway to opportunity—not a barrier.

#FundTheFutureNow #EducationEquity #DegreesNotDebt

A background image showing a group of people at a protest. In the foreground, a woman is wearing a yellow t-shirt with 'NAACP' printed on it. To her right, another person is wearing a black t-shirt with 'DEFEND ROJAVA' on it. In the background, there are signs, one of which says 'ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE'.

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SAMPLE POSTS BY PLATFORM

FACEBOOK

The cost of college is threatening an entire generation's future.

With student debt skyrocketing and financial aid shrinking, too many students are forced to choose between education and financial stability.

We're organizing to change that.

Join the movement to demand #DegreesNotDebt and help us #FundTheFutureNow

STORY PROMPTS (USER-GENERATED CONTENT)

Encourage chapters & students to post:

- "My college costs are ___ and it makes me feel ___"
- "I deserve a degree without debt because ___"
- "College should be affordable because ___"

MESSAGE FRAMING TIP

- Use positive + future-focused messaging for college students
- Use urgent/negative framing for high school audiences
- Always center: futures, freedom, opportunity

SHARE THE MESSAGE

- Feel free to develop your own customized posts to add stories, data, and quotes using the sample social media posts.
- Add the #FundTheFutureNow #DegreesNotDebt hashtag to your social media posts.
- Follow @NAACP on X, Instagram, and Facebook and share our content via your personal or organizational accounts

Graphics

Find the graphics you need to mobilize voters in your community. [**DOWNLOAD HERE.**](#)