

FAFSA Testimonial

Good afternoon. My name is Grace Horn, and I am a Business Management major at Minnesota State College Southeast in Red Wing. I want to tell you all about my experience with FAFSA and how it has affected my family over the last couple of years I've been in school. I am a first-generation college student who comes from a single-parent, low-income household who never thought college was an option for me until I understood how Financial Aid and the Pell Grant positively impacted myself and others within my demographic. Without financial assistance, I would not have the chance to go to college and pursue my dreams of having a higher education and to be successful. As helpful as FAFSA continues to be for me, I want to present the struggles that I have experienced alongside this positivity; having 0 estimated family contribution is hard in itself, but asking my mother to input her financial information caused an overwhelming feeling of shame for her that had a ripple effect on our relationship. She wanted to give me the opportunity to go to college without assistance, and I could feel that from her. She was disappointed in herself for having zero contributions and became increasingly frustrated any time I had to re-apply for FAFSA. This is one of many reasons that I am in support of Universal FAFSA; having the ability to appeal my application due to parental refusal and disdain and being able to opt-out of inputting my parental financials in order to submit my FAFSA form. Secondly, requiring graduating high school seniors to apply for FAFSA allows these federal funds to be properly allocated and utilized to give more students the opportunity for pursuing higher education when they may not have thought college was in their future, just like myself. The implementation of Universal FAFSA directly impacts future generational success and will benefit our economy and society by helping young students enter the workforce and fulfill their educational dreams.

Thank you for listening to my story.