

# Student Aid and Affordability Presentation

## FY 2024-25

January 29, 2026



# Changes to Financial Aid in 2025

FAFSA Simplification Act has resulted in the following:

## **Pell eligibility increases CU system-wide :**

- The changes to the student eligibility resulted in 20% more Pell grant recipients (+2,300 students)
- Total Pell grant dollars increased by 30% over the prior year (+\$19 million)
- The total number of students who applied for was essentially flat (+100 students or +0.3%)



Beginning in 2024-25 the New FAFSA changes are in effect. Under the changes Pell eligibility has expanded.

# Changes to Financial Aid in 2025

- Financial aid data will no longer reflect aid by income ranges, instead it shown by need gradients using the Student Aid Index.
- Categories Maximum Pell and Level one reflect CU Promise eligibility ranges.
- Full Pell Eligibility depends on financial need, which is determined by the FAFSA and a student's SAI.

Student Aid Index Range	SAI Range
Max Pell Eligibility	(1,500) to 0
Level 1 (100% Pell Eligibility)	1 to 6,657
Level 2 (101% to 200% above Pell Eligibility)	6,658 to 13,314
Level 3 (201)% to 300% above Pell Eligibility)	13,315 to 19,971
Level 4 (301% above Pell Eligibility)	19,972 and above



Beginning in 2024-25 the New FAFSA changes are in effect.

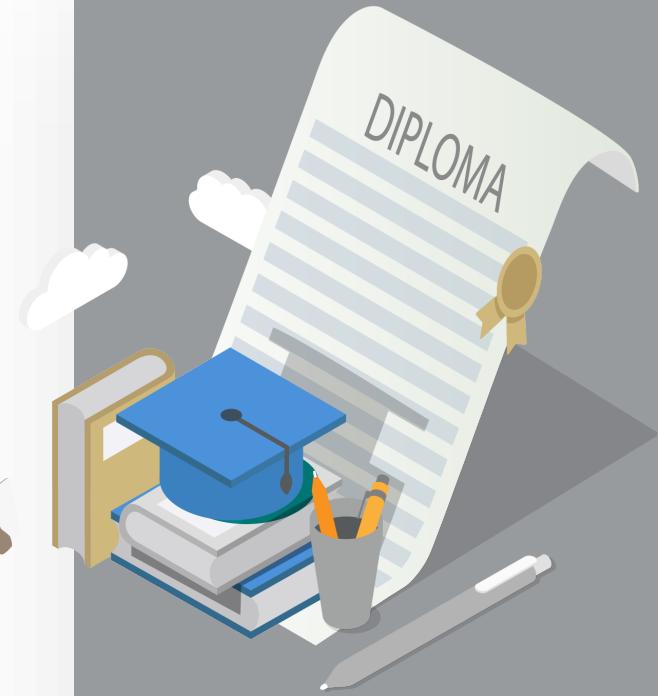
Under the changes, reporting will no longer include income ranges.

The AGI data is populated with IRS data into the FAFSA under FAFSA Simplification Act and its use is limited to financial aid administration.

# Pending Changes to Federal Student Loans

## Changes to Federal Loan Limits:

- Caps the annual loan limits at \$20,500 for graduate students and \$50,000 for professional students.
- The aggregate limit is capped at \$100,000 for graduate students and \$200,000 for professional students and does not include amounts borrowed as an undergraduate.
  - Borrowers who are both graduate and professional students at some point in their educational careers may only borrow up to \$200,000 in total for graduate and professional school.
- Lifetime Loan Limits - \$257,500 lifetime borrowing limit on all federal loans (excludes PLUS)



# Pending Changes to Federal Student Aid Effective July 1, 2026

- **Professional Loan Exclusions:**

Nursing	Physician Assistants	Architecture
Physical Therapists	Audiologists	Accountants
Educators	Social Workers	

## Changes to Plus Loans:

- Caps ParentPLUS at \$20,000 per year (maximum \$65,000/dependent)
- Eliminates PLUS Loans for graduate students

## Loan Proration (pending)

What does this mean for students? Legacy provisions for continuing students for up to 3 years or completion.



# National Student Loan Debt

**\$1.8 trillion**

Includes all outstanding balances for federal (\$1.6 trillion) and private student loans (estimated at \$125 billion) processed through financial aid, plus accrued interest (in 2025).



Default rates are much lower for those who earn credentials



**8%**  
of outstanding debt comes from private loans.



**50%**  
of outstanding student loan debt is from graduate students.



Despite the concerns about student debt levels, the fact remains: **a college education pays off and is an investment worth making.**



Non-completers are more likely to default on student loans than completers.

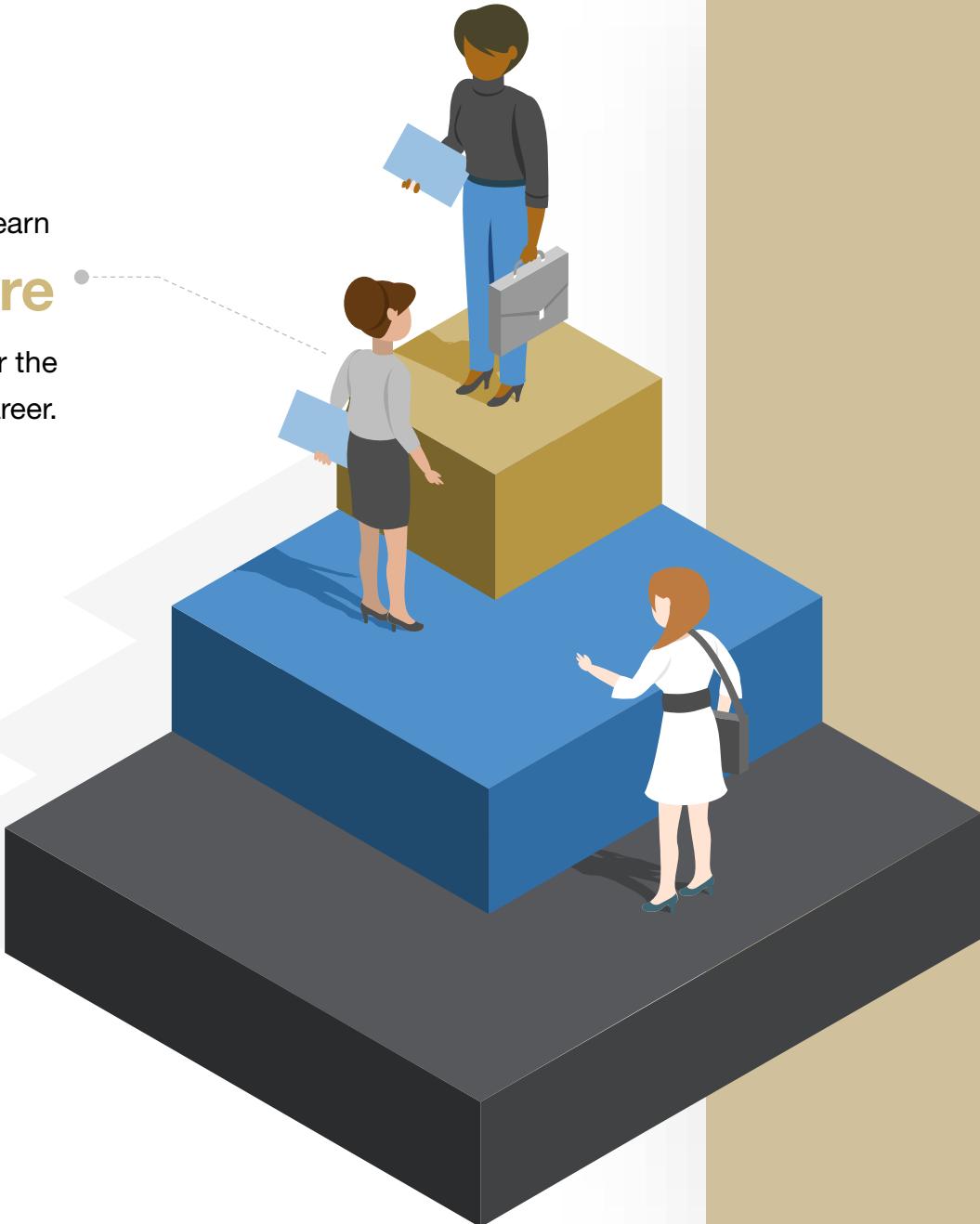


On average, Bachelor's degree recipients earn

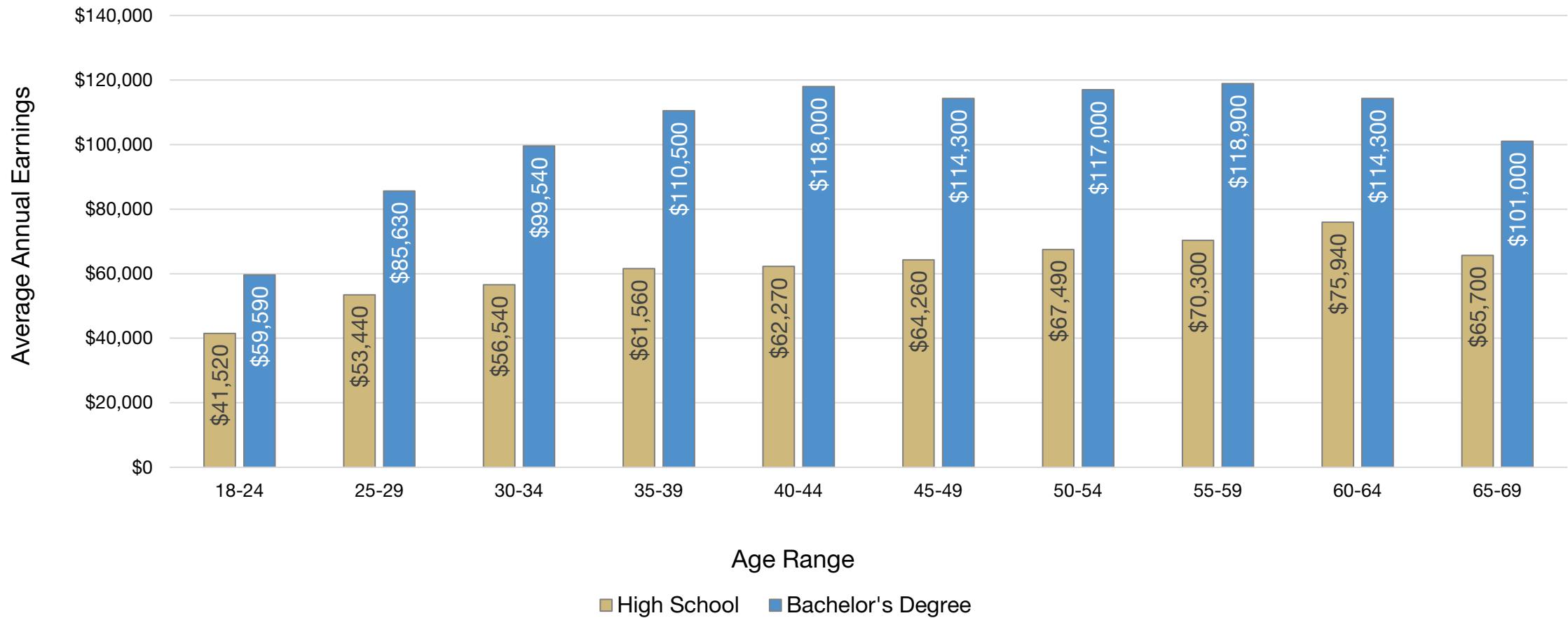
**\$1.8 million more**

than High School graduates over the  
course of their career.

# Higher Average Annual Earnings



# Average Annual Earnings High School vs. Bachelor's Degree



Note: Does not include possible earnings while pursuing Bachelor's degree.

Source: Average Annual Earnings for full-time year-round workers by education, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2025 Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

# Colorado



# Facts About Outstanding Student Loan Debt in Colorado

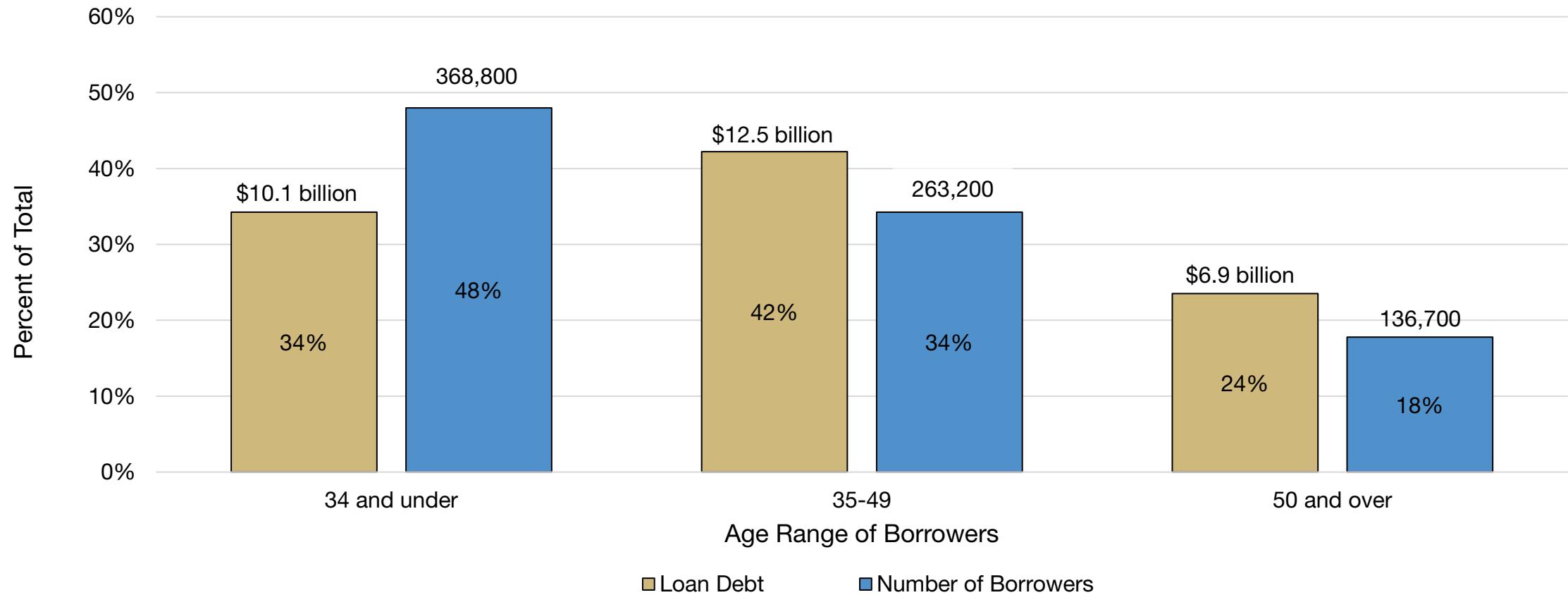
**Of the \$29.5 Billion in outstanding debt for borrowers residing in Colorado:**

- 48% of borrowers are under the age of 34, holding 34% of total outstanding debt.
- 73% of borrowers have loan balances of \$40,000 or less, holding 28% of outstanding debt.
- 8% of borrowers have loan balances over \$100,000, holding 41% of total outstanding debt.

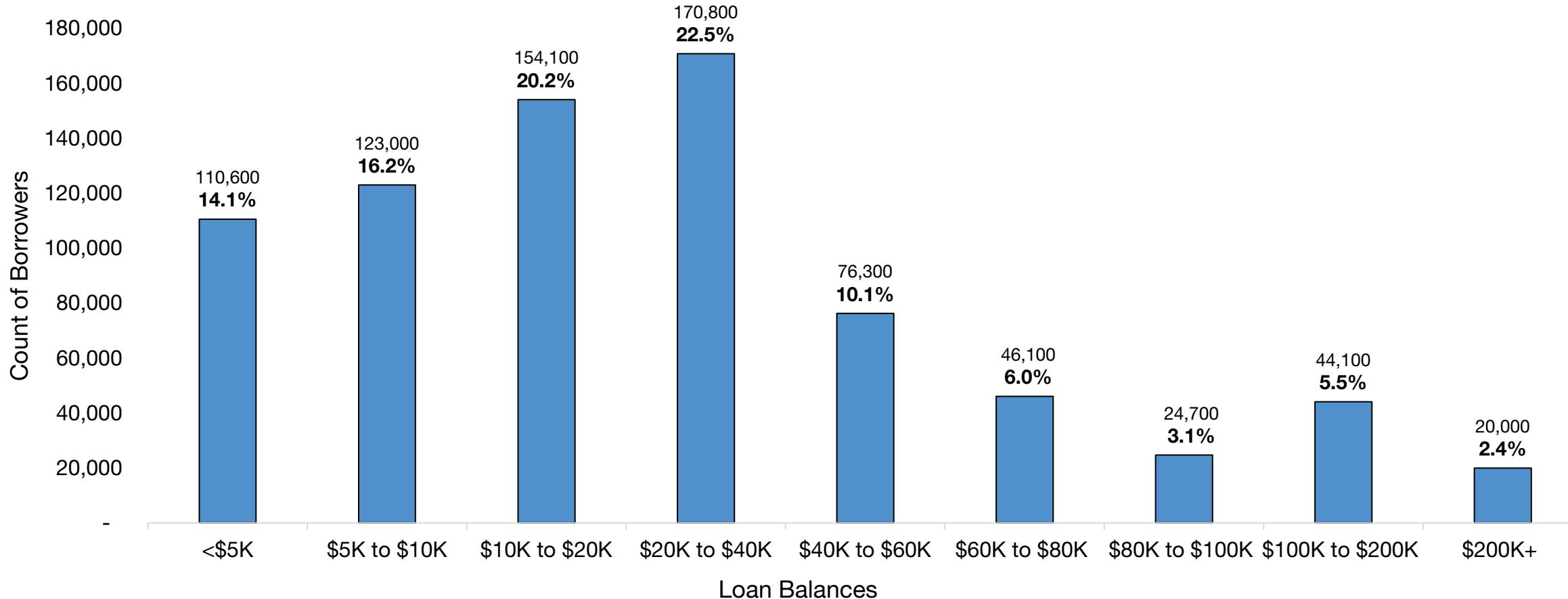


As of June 2025  
**769,700**  
**residents**  
held  
**\$29.5 billion**  
in federal student loan  
debt in Colorado.

# Total Outstanding Student Loan Debt by Age, Colorado



# Outstanding \$29.5 Billion Student Loan Debt in Colorado by Loan Balance

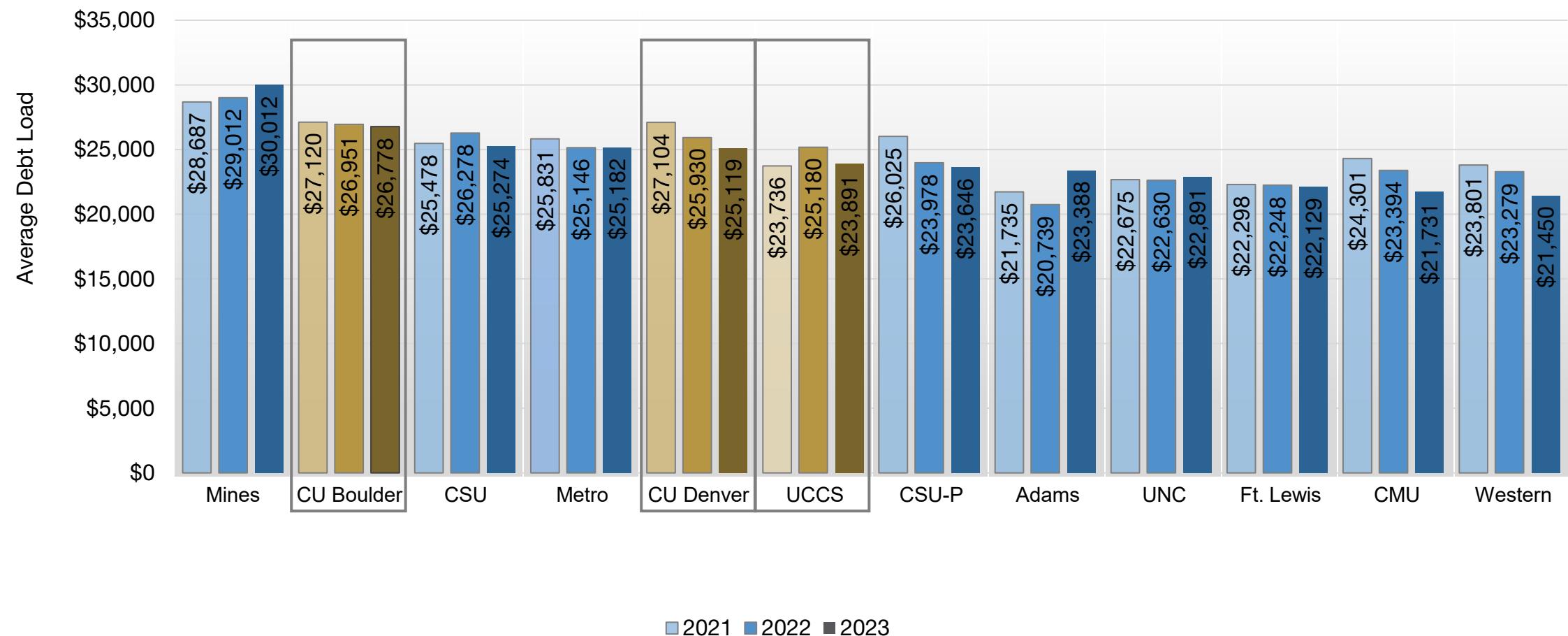


Note: Borrowers with outstanding balances residing in Colorado rounded to nearest thousand

Source: US Department of Education as of June 2025.

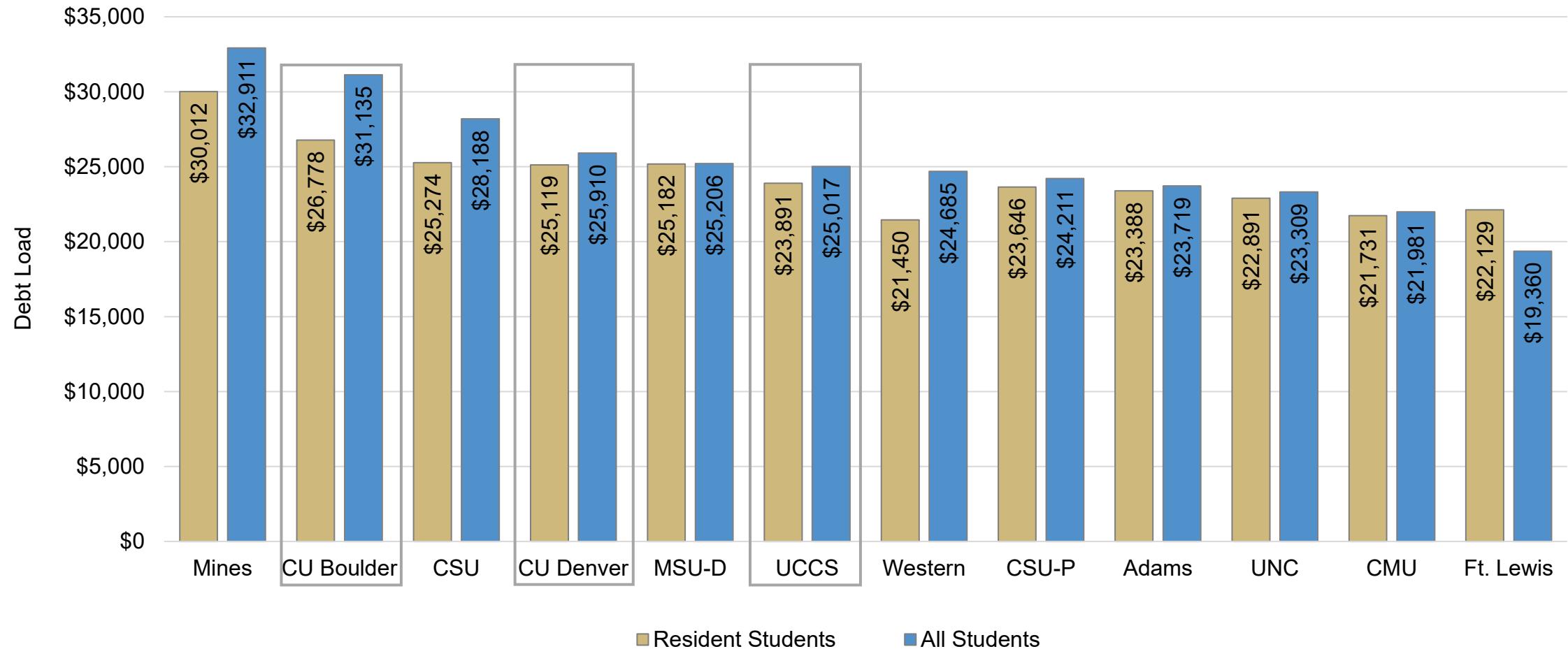
# Average Resident Undergraduate Student Debt

## Bachelor's Degree Recipients with Loans



■ 2021 ■ 2022 ■ 2023

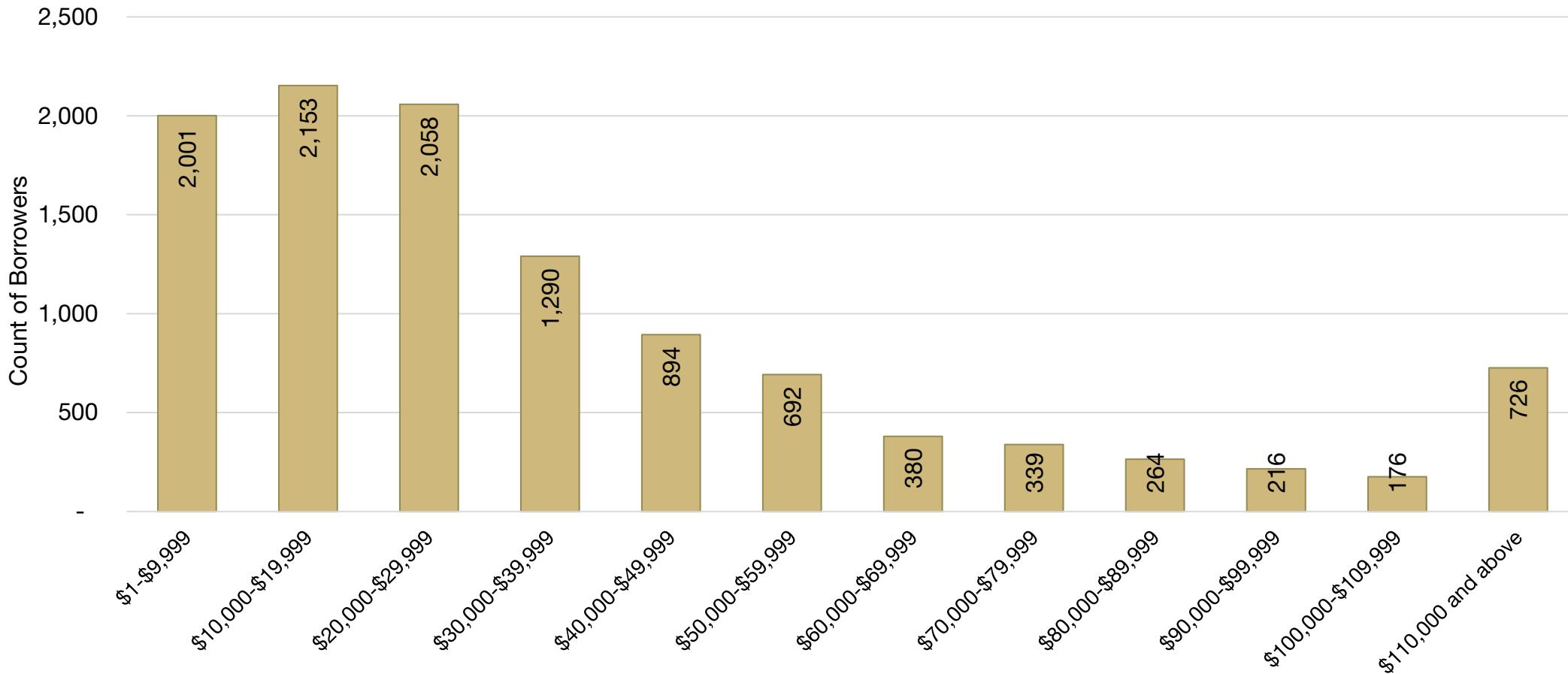
## Average Undergraduate Debt Load Upon Graduation (FY 2023)



Source: Colorado Department of Higher Education; includes Federal Direct, Federal Perkins, Federal Other, and private loans.

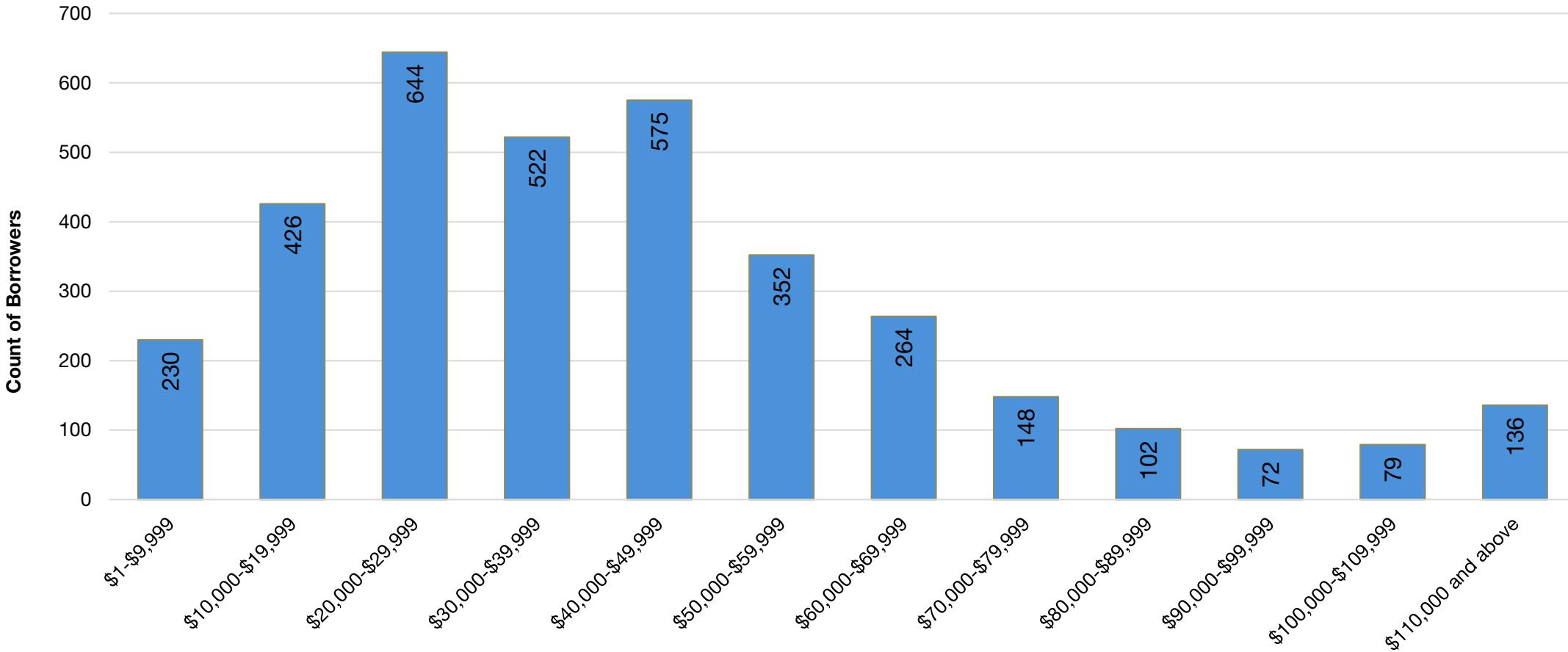
\*Varies by campus.

# Bachelor's Degree Recipients Loan Amounts in Colorado (FY 2024)



Source: 2022 Student Loan Data from SURDS from the Colorado Department of Higher Education, public institutions. FY 2024 graduates taking loans in prior 10 years.

# Master's Degree Recipients Loan Amounts in Colorado (FY 2024)



Source: 2022 Student Loan Data from SURDS from the Colorado Department of Higher Education, public institutions. FY 2024 graduates taking loans in prior 10 years.

# Resident Undergraduate Student Debt Takeaways



of CU graduates leave CU with no debt\*



of students who graduate with debt do so with \$30,000 or less



of students with a FAFSA receive some type of aid while attending CU



\*Varies by campus.

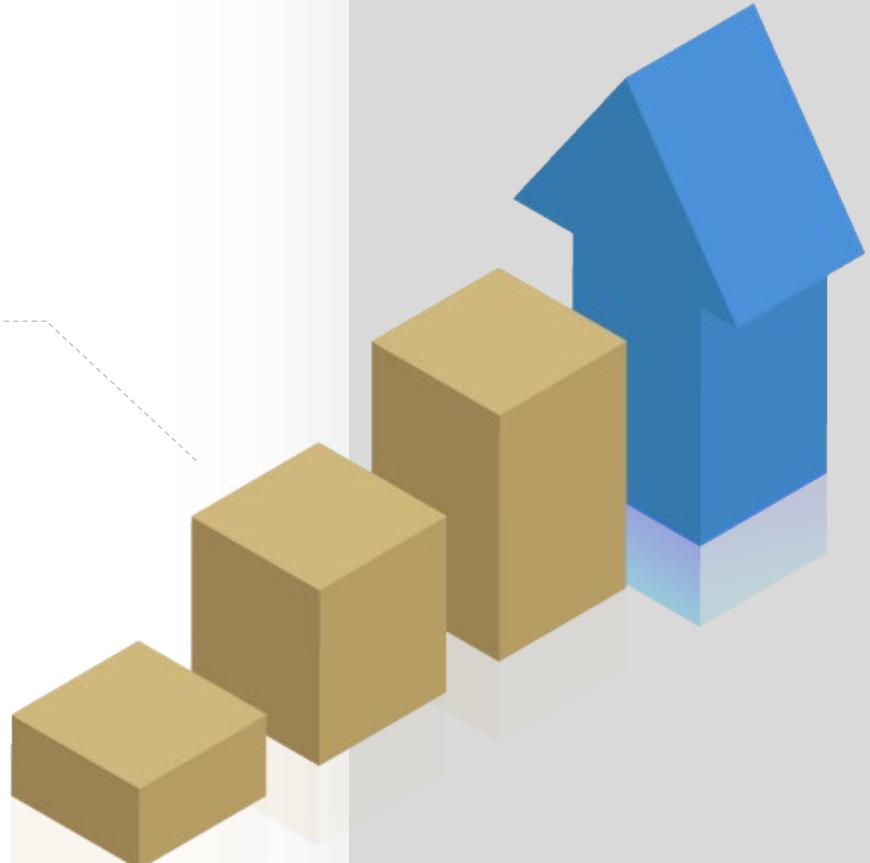
# Financial Aid History by Source

University of Colorado's institutional aid has grown by more than

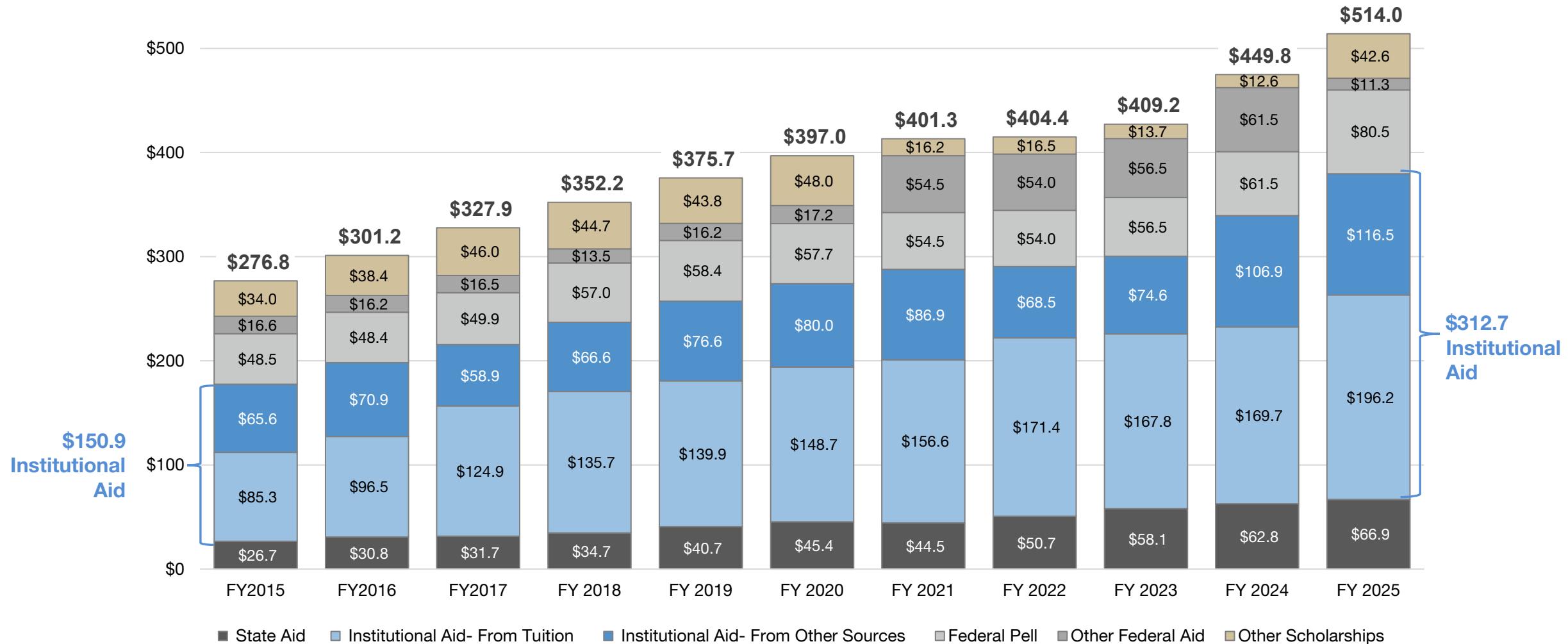
**107%**

since 2015

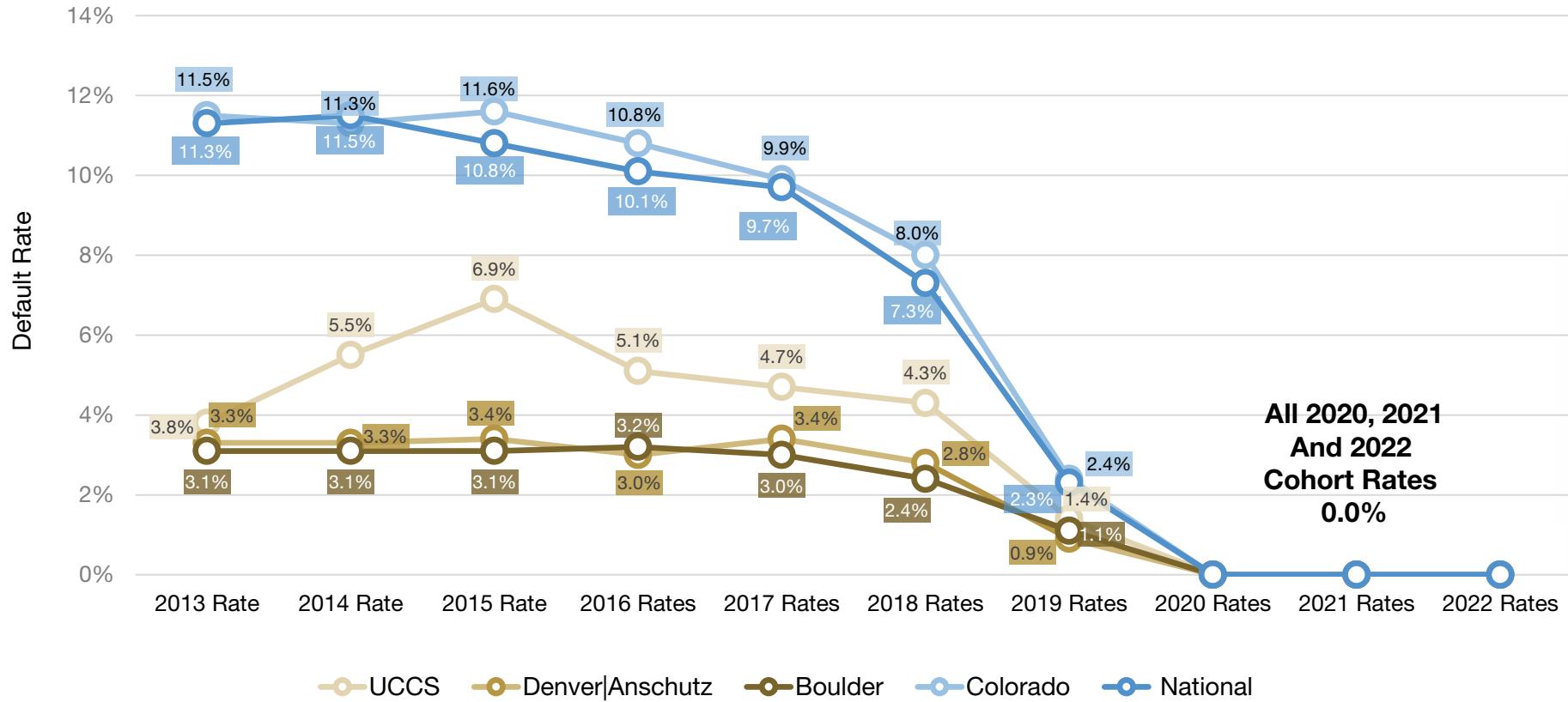
*From \$150.9 million in 2015 to \$312.7 million in 2025*



# Financial Aid History by Source (in millions)



# Student Loan Default Rates



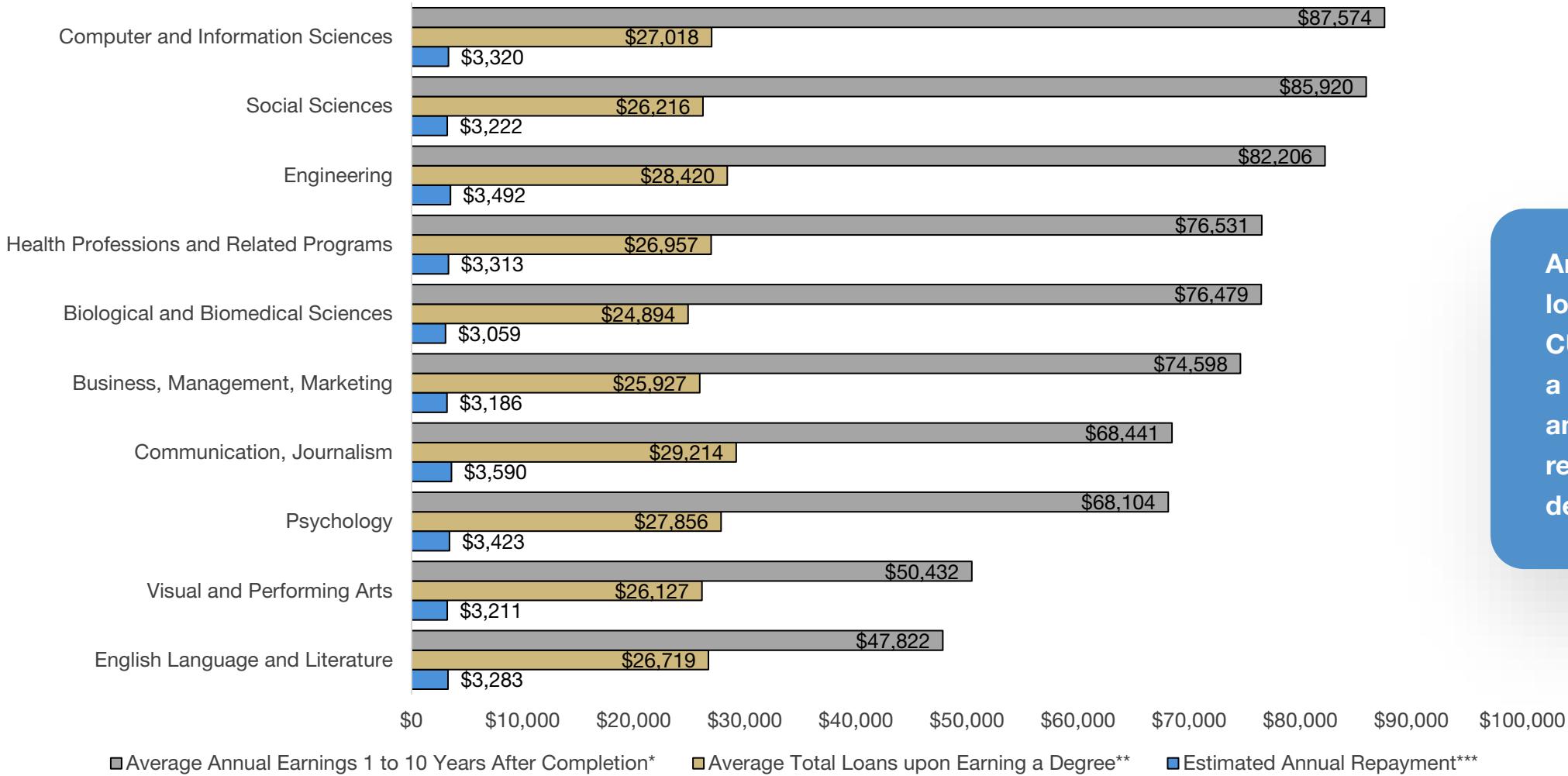
This data reflects the repayment pause that expired in October 2023.

2023 rates will not be available until borrowers have been in repayment for three years.

Source: U.S. Department of Education

Under the CARES Act, federal student loan payments, collections on defaulted loans and interest accrual were suspended. Executive action has continued this benefit through September 2023. Challenges to the SAVE program resulted in borrowers in forced forbearance until it is settled.

# Annual Earnings vs Annual Loan Payment (by Degree)

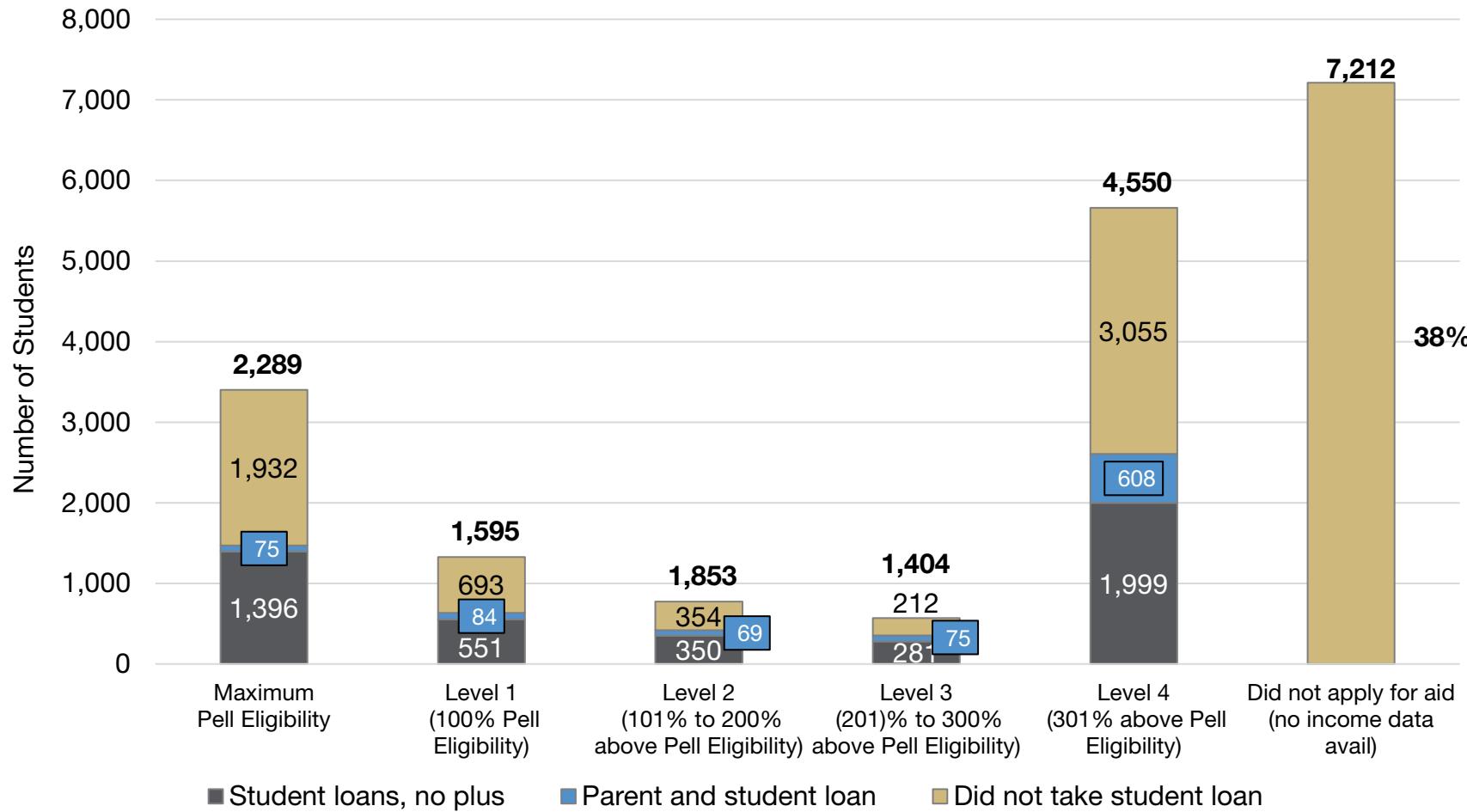


Annual student loan payments for CU graduates are a small share of annual earnings, regardless of degree earned.

# CU Boulder



# CU Boulder Resident Undergraduates (FY 2025)

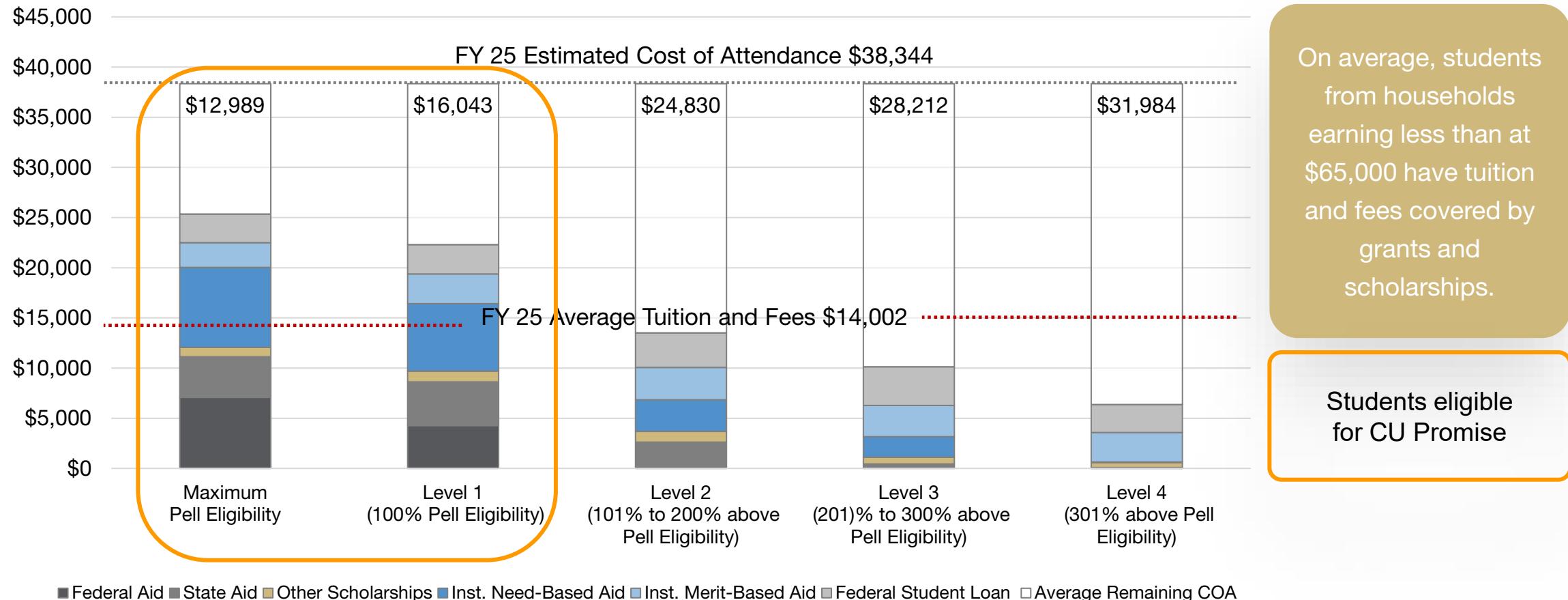


In 2025

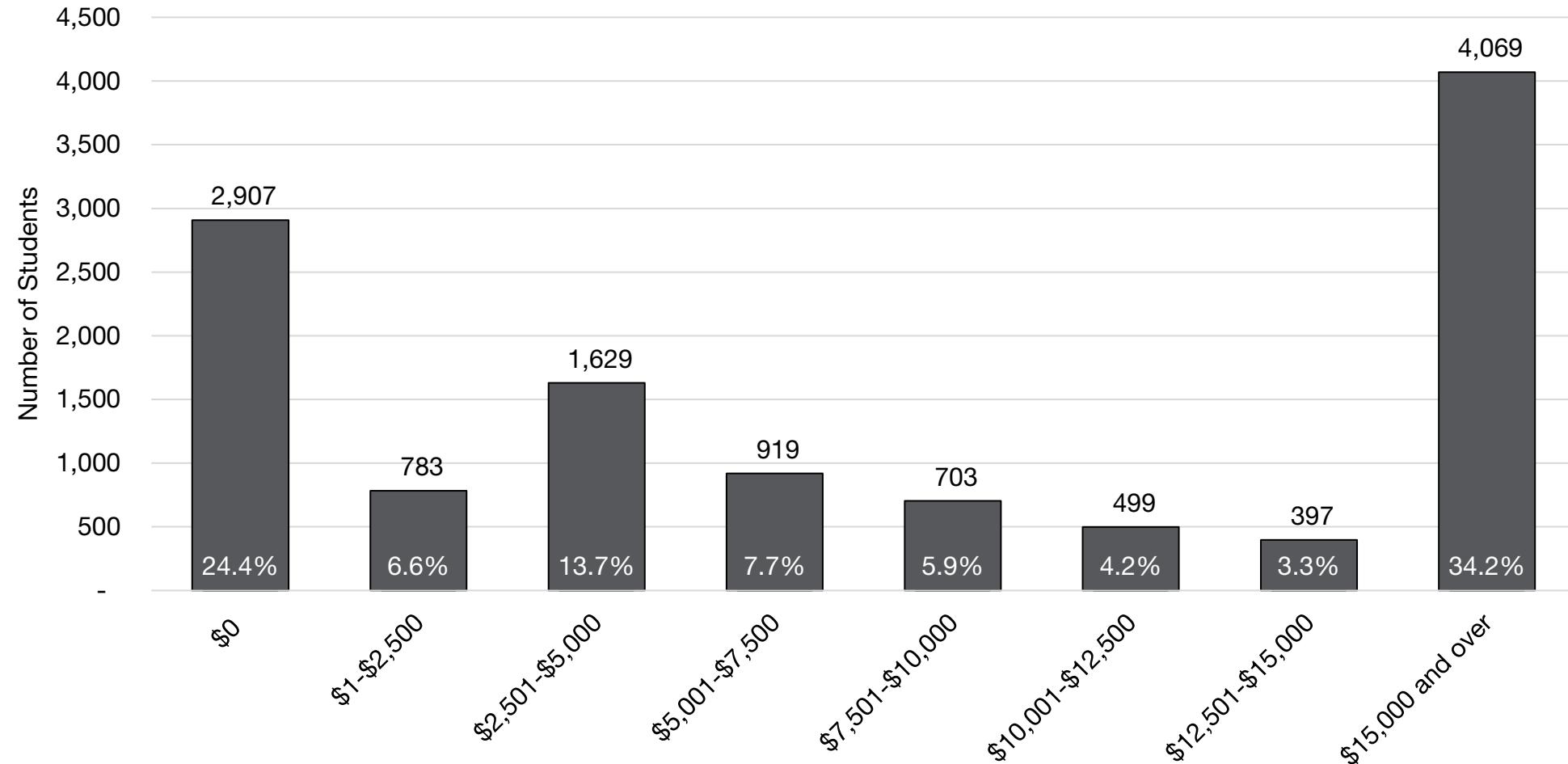
70%

of resident undergraduate students did not take a loan at CU Boulder. For those that did, the loans are distributed across all income groups.

# CU Boulder Resident Undergraduate Average Financial Assistance (2025, new cohort )



## CU Boulder Grants Award Distribution by Amount (FY 2025)



More than

76%

Colorado resident undergraduate students with a FAFSA receive some type of aid at CU Boulder

More than

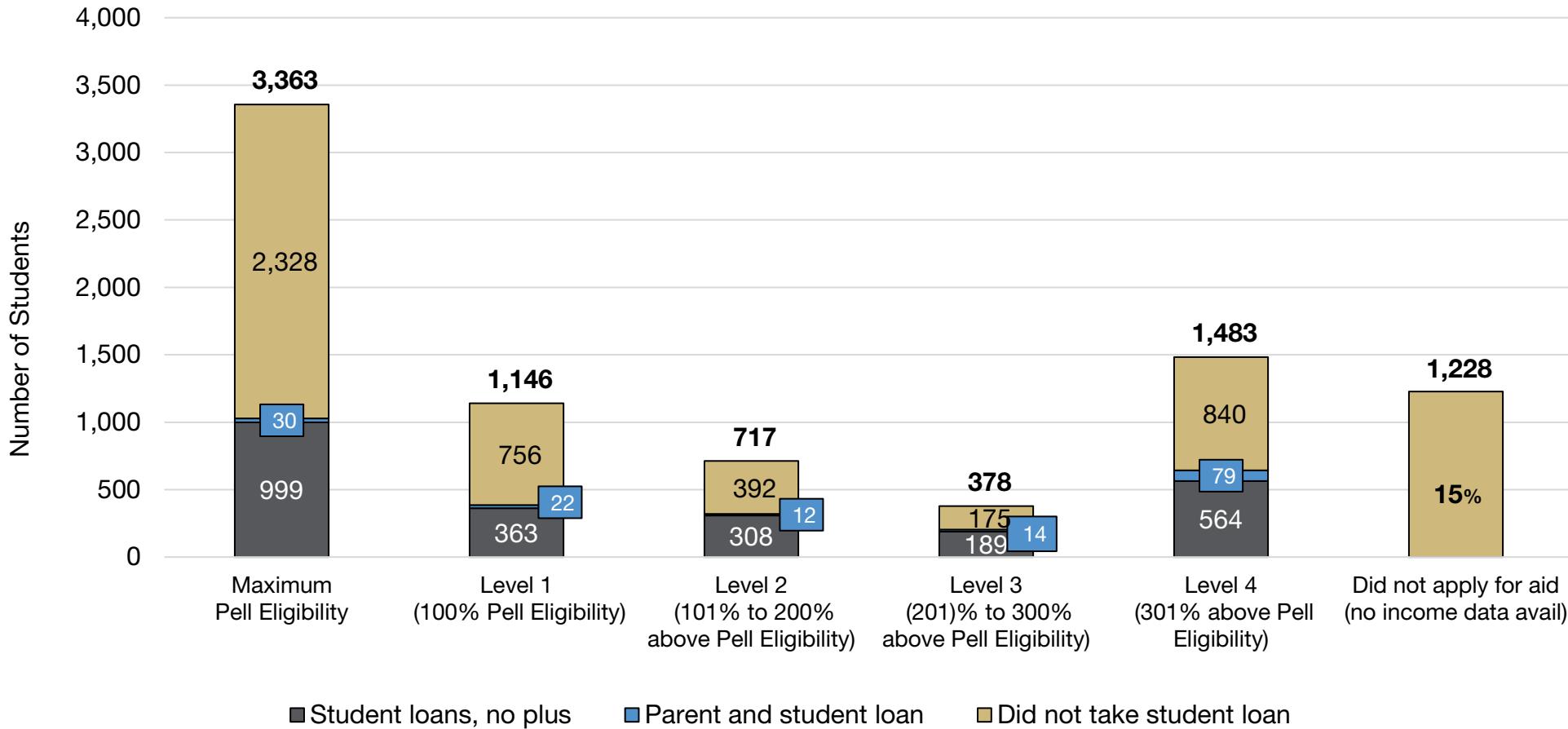
34%

receive enough to cover tuition and fees

# CU Denver



## CU Denver Resident Undergraduates (FY 2025)

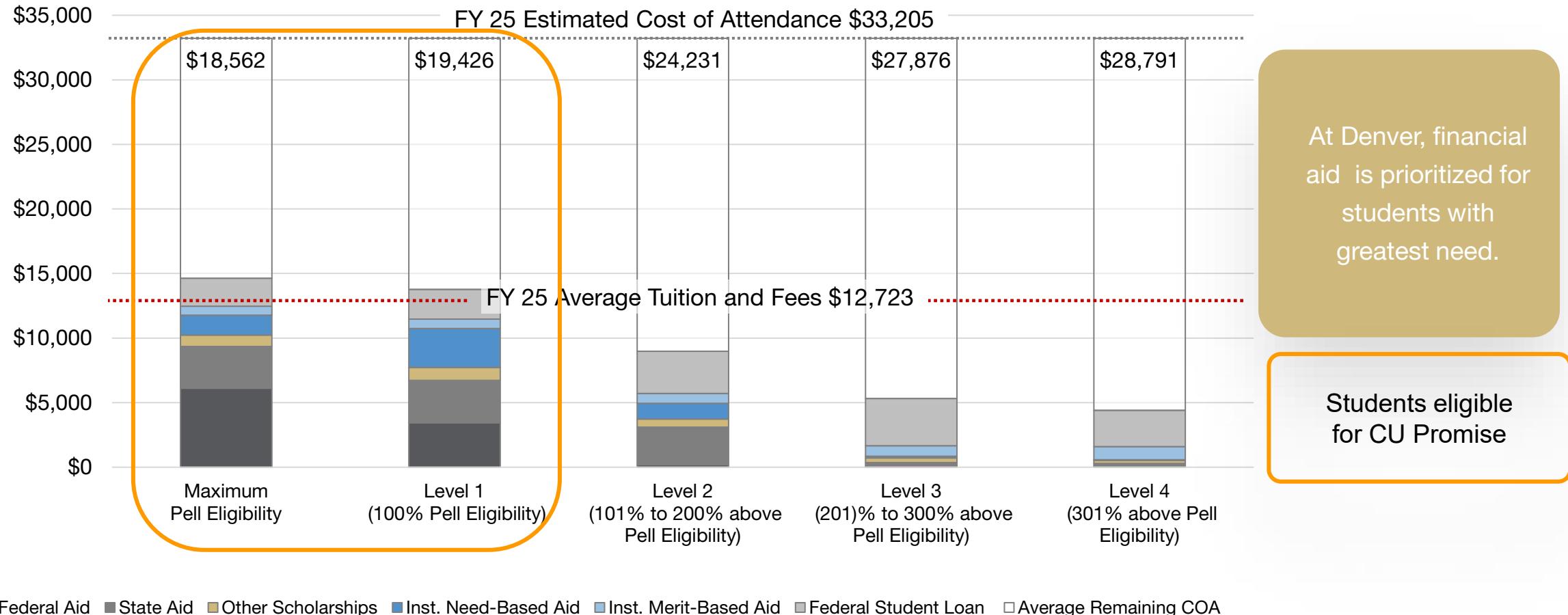


In 2025

69%

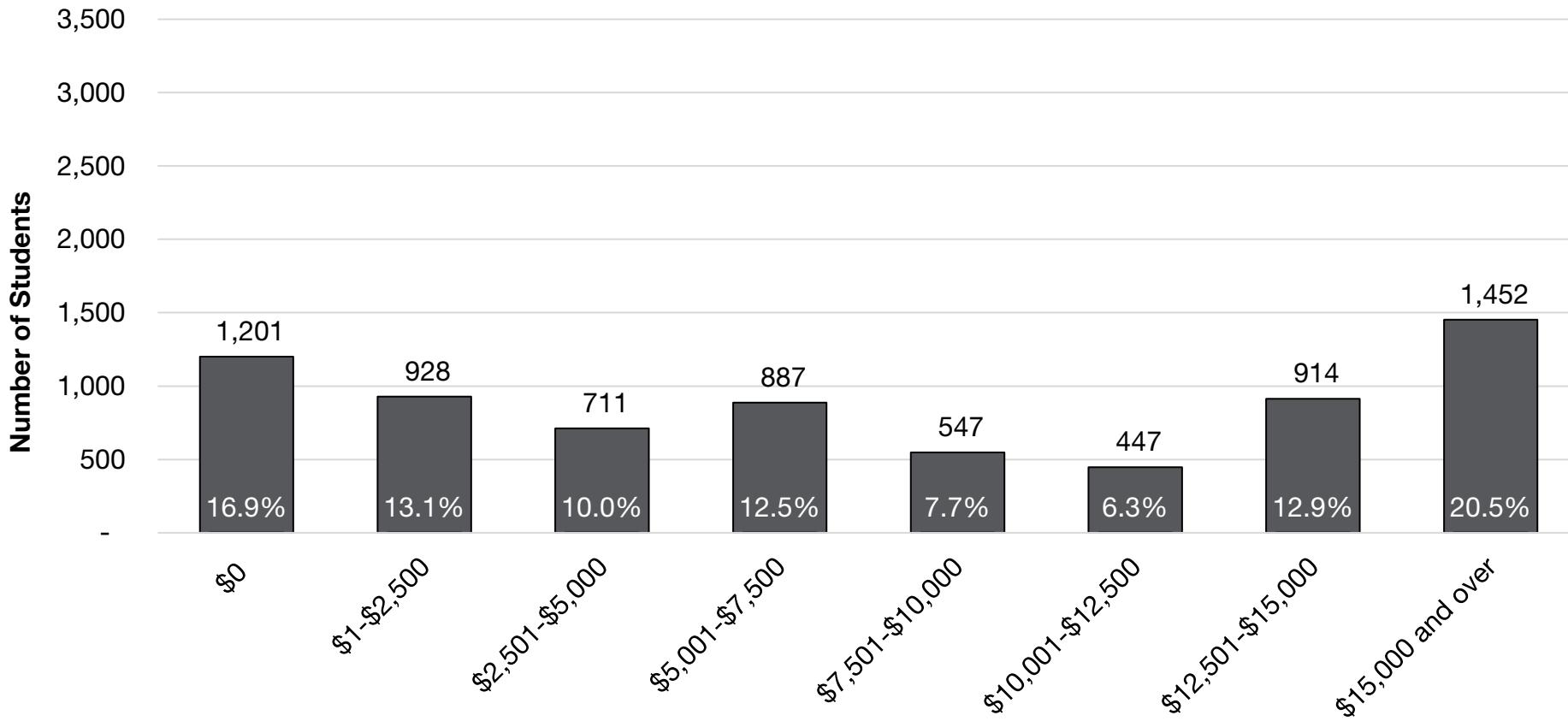
of resident undergraduate students did not take a loan at CU Denver. For those that did, the loans are distributed across all income groups

# CU Denver Resident Undergraduate Average Financial Assistance (FY 2025)



Source: CU Financial Aid; Does not include private loans; Estimated Cost of Attendance is the average Nine Month Cost of Attendance for selected population.

## CU Denver Award Distribution by Amount (FY 2025)



More than

83%

Colorado resident undergraduate students with a FAFSA receive some type of aid while attending CU Denver

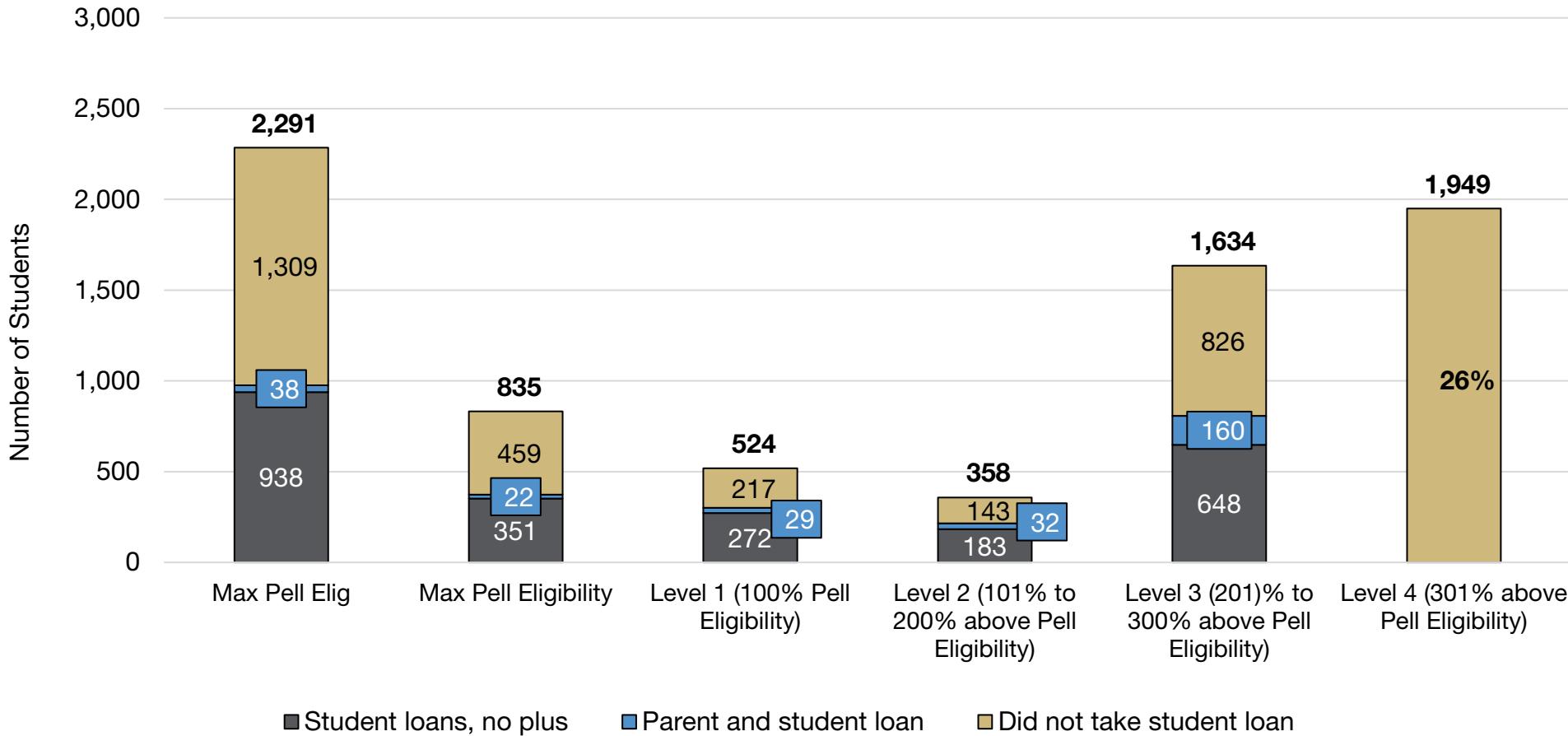
31%

receive enough to cover tuition and fees at CU Denver

# UCCS



# UCCS Resident Undergraduates (FY 2025)



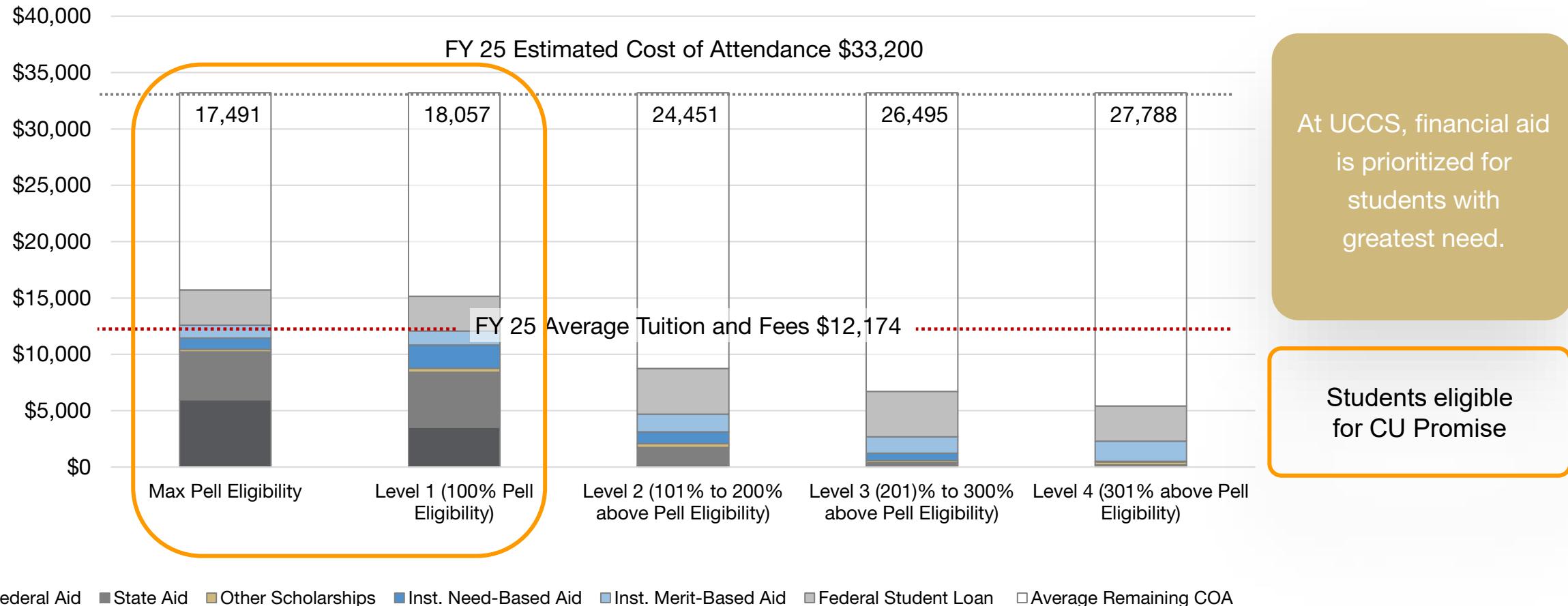
In 2025

65%

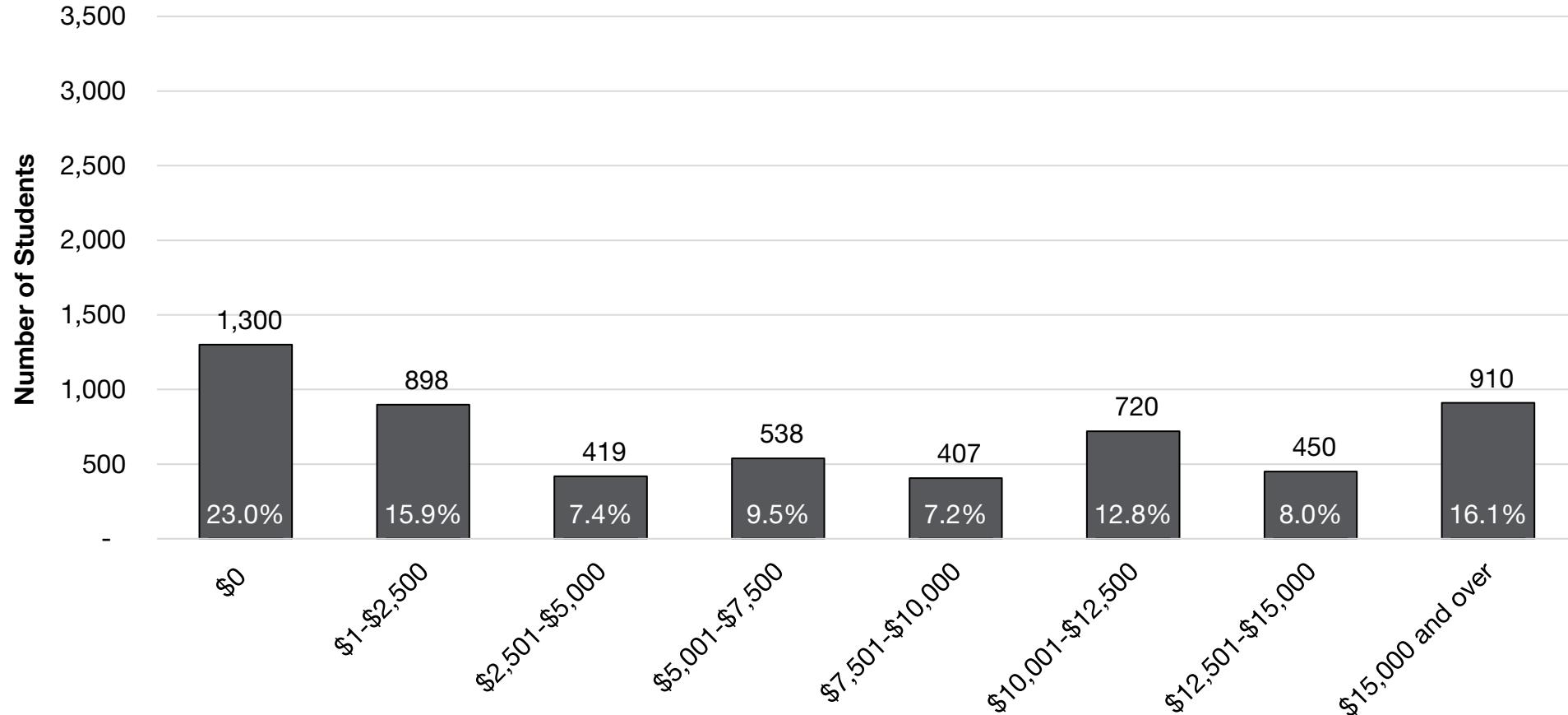
of resident undergraduate students did not take a loan at UCCS.

For those that did, the loans are distributed across all income groups

# UCCS Resident Undergraduate Average Financial Assistance (FY 2025)



## UCCS Award Distribution by Amount (FY 2025)



77%

Colorado resident undergraduate students with a FAFSA receive some type of aid while attending UCCS

Of students who receive aid, more than

24%

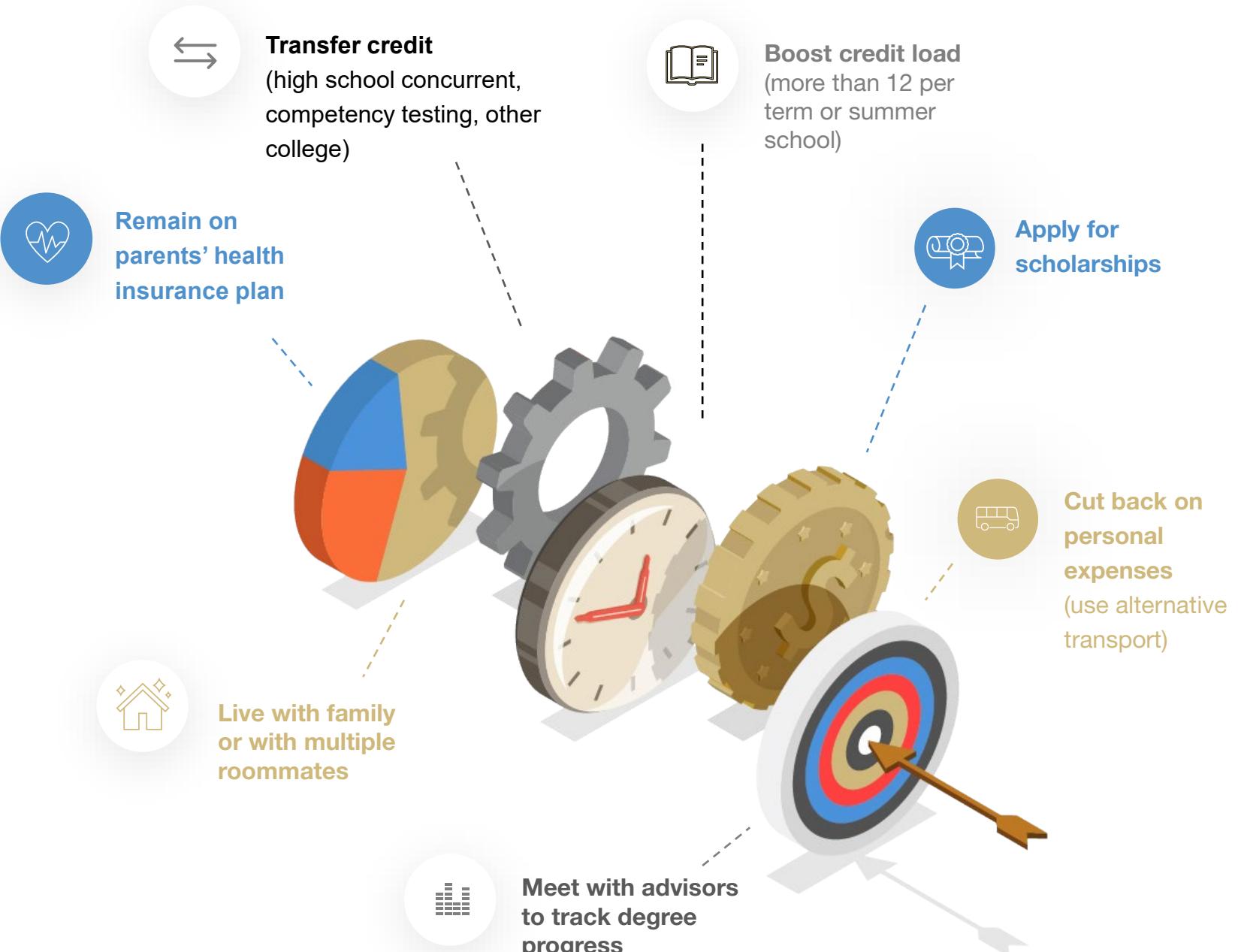
receive enough to cover tuition and fees at UCCS

# Closing the Cost Gap

## Ways to Reduce Cost

### Other Means

- Part-time work
- College savings plans
- Parent or private loans
- Credit cards



# Conclusions



Out-of-pocket tuition and fee increases are mitigated for many low- and middle-income students.

Of all resident, undergraduate students system-wide:

**34%**

took federal student loans in FY 2025

**5%**

had parent loans in FY 2025

- System-wide, around half CU students graduate with no debt.
- Loan default rates at 0.0% due to suspended loan repayments during pandemic.
- Historically, CU students have lower default rates compared to Colorado and National averages.

# Additional Information

For more information about affordability and student financial aid, including:

- Tuition and Fees
- Institutional Aid
- Student loans
- Out of Pocket Costs
- Average Cost of Attendance
- Alumni Earnings
- Links to other resources



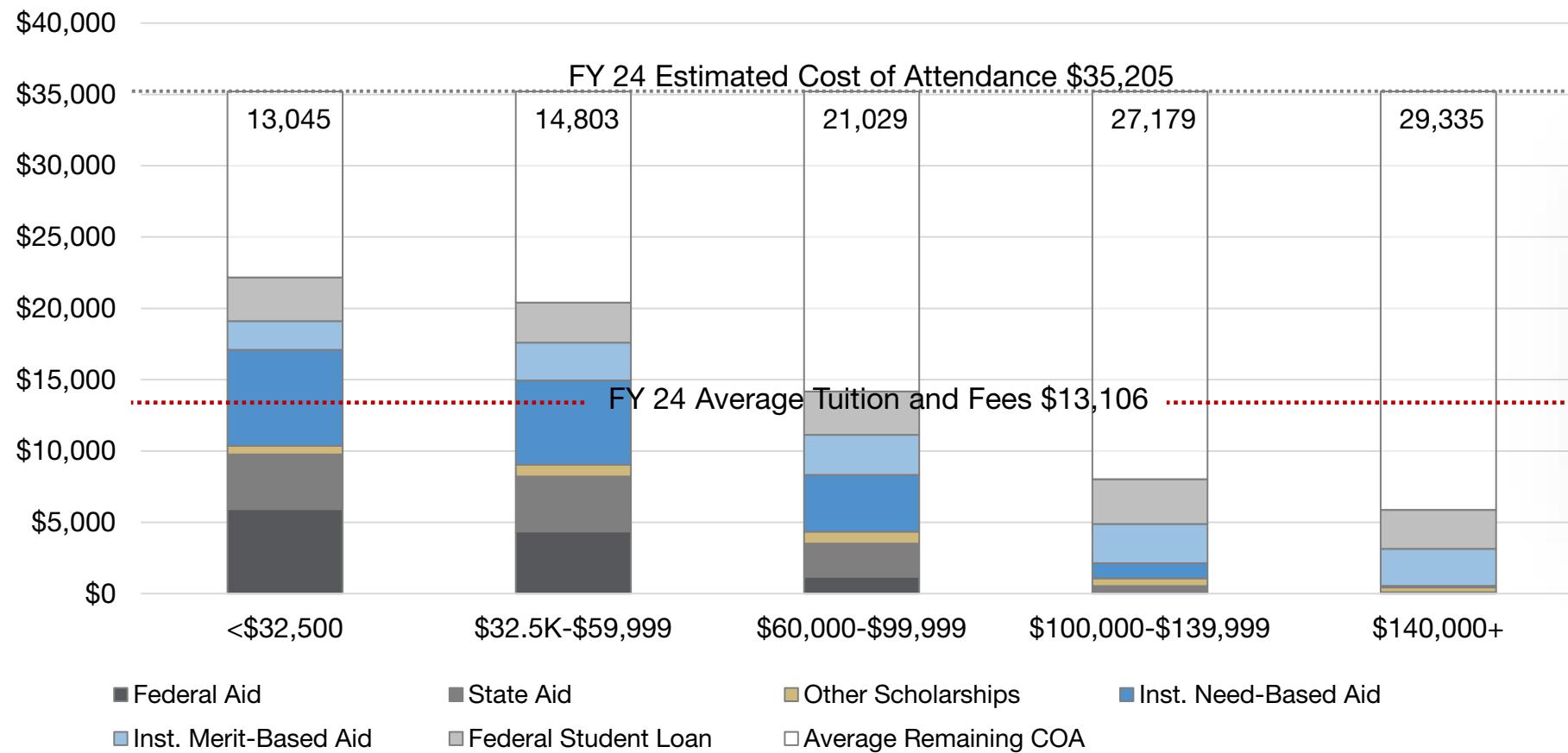
Visit our website at  
[cu.edu/affordability](http://cu.edu/affordability)

# Appendix A

## CU Boulder 4-Year Guarantee Cohorts



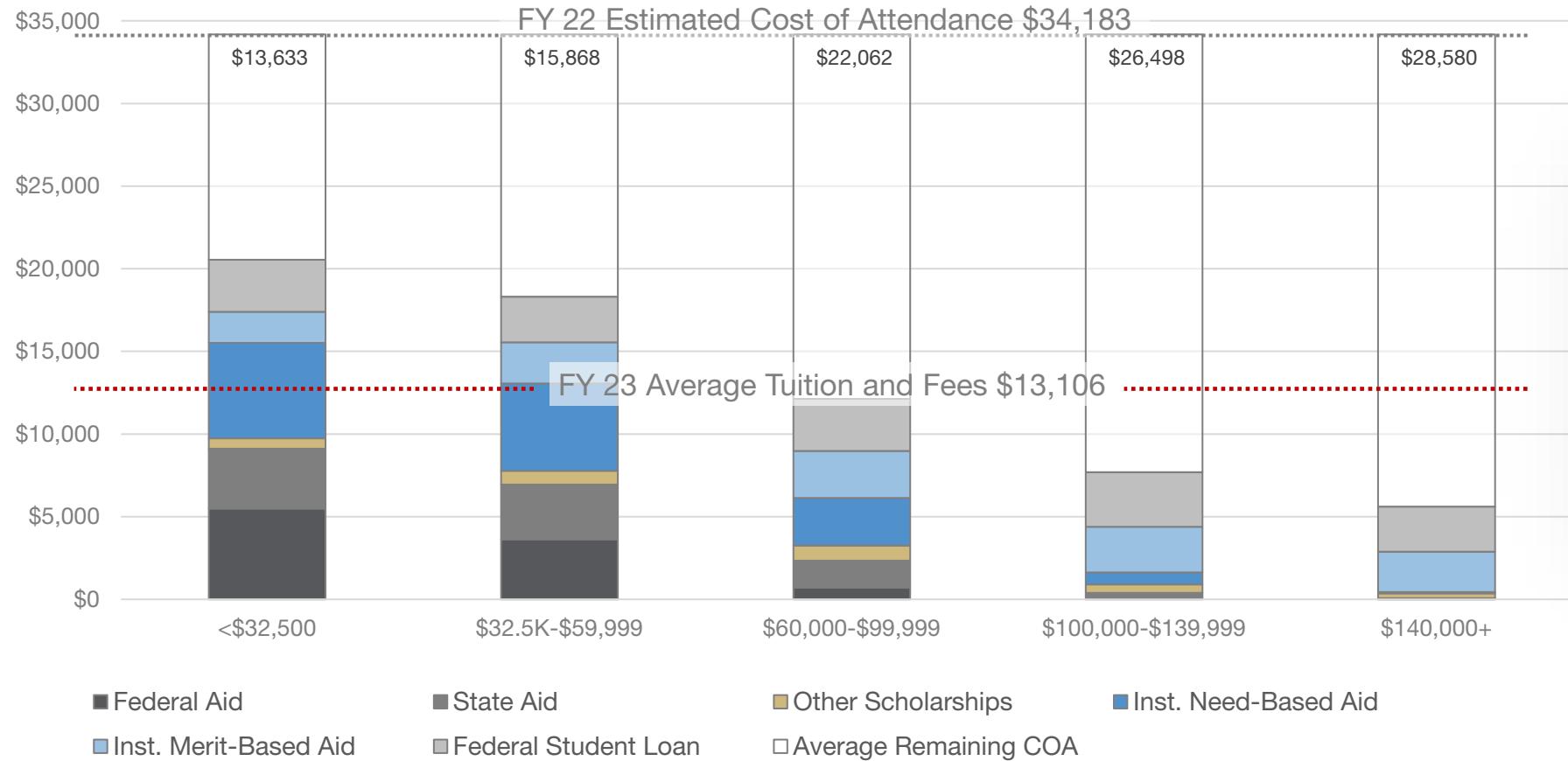
# CU Boulder Resident Undergraduate Average Financial Assistance (2024, new cohort )



On average, students from households earning less than \$60,000 have tuition and fees covered by grants and scholarships.

Source: CU Financial Aid; Does not include private loans; Estimated Cost of Attendance is the average Nine Month Cost of Attendance for selected population. Average tuition applies to incoming cohort only.

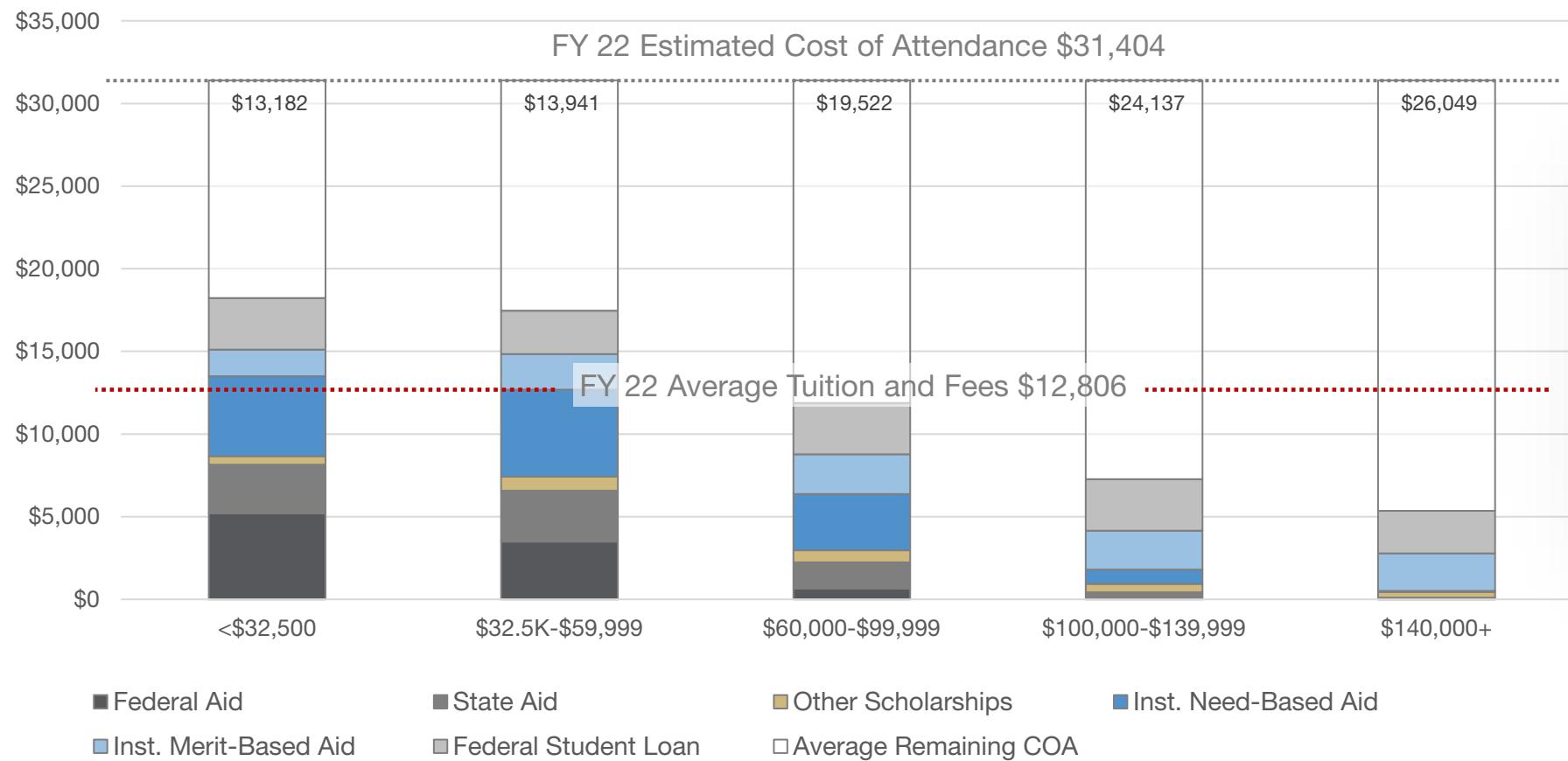
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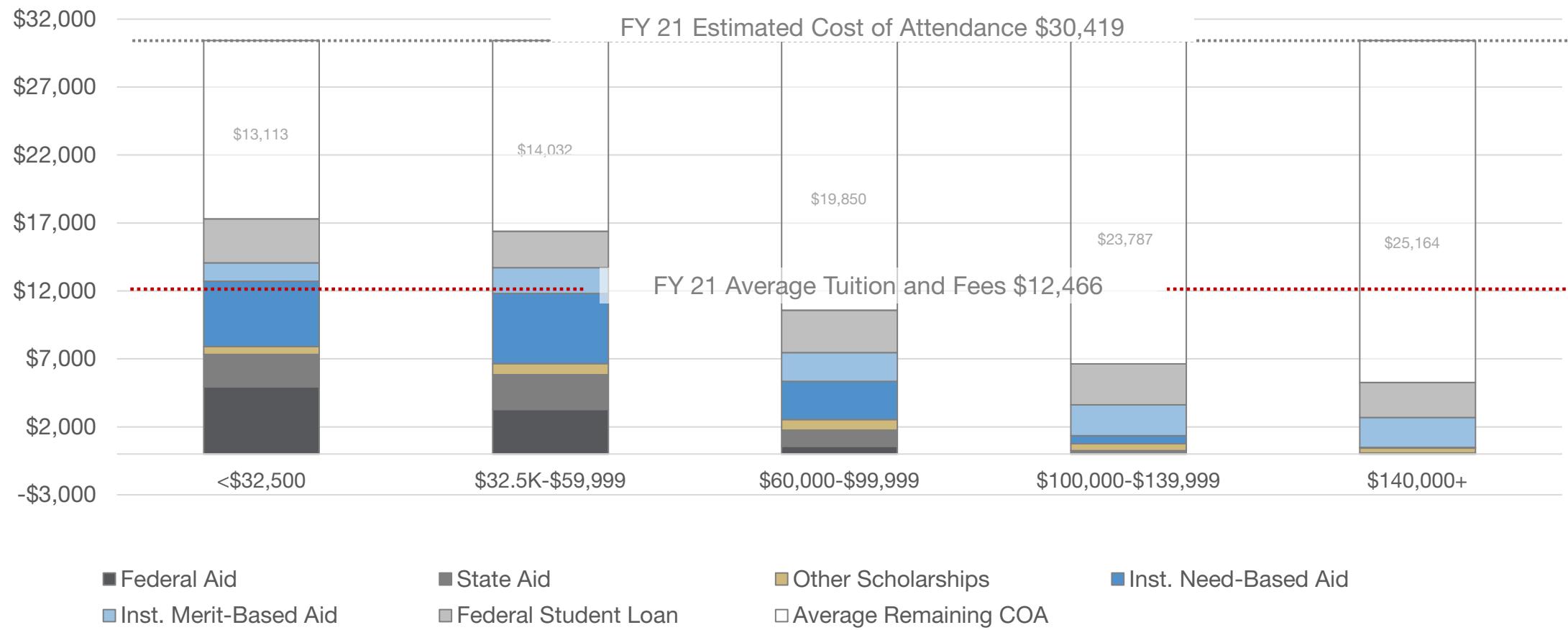
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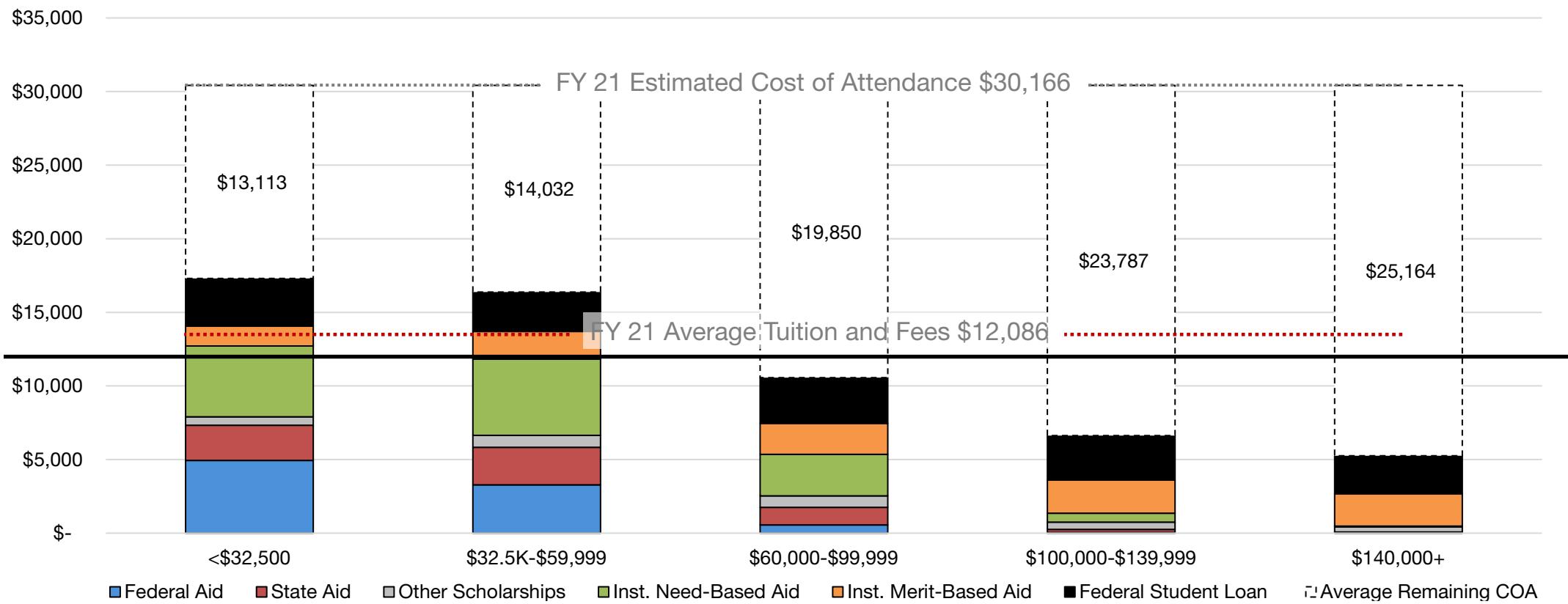
Source: CU Financial Aid; Does not include private loans; Estimated Cost of Attendance is the average Nine Month Cost of Attendance for selected population. Average tuition applies to incoming cohort only.

# CU Boulder Resident Undergraduate Average Financial Assistance (2021, new cohort )



Source: CU Financial Aid; Does not include private loans; Estimated Cost of Attendance is the average Nine Month Cost of Attendance for selected population. Average tuition applies to incoming cohort only.

# CU Boulder Resident Undergraduate Average Financial Assistance (2020 cohort )



Source: CU Financial Aid; Does not include private loans; Estimated Cost of Attendance is the average Nine Month Cost of Attendance for selected population. Average tuition applies to incoming cohort only.