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Contact: William Lutz 202-785-5100

**Majorities See Education as a Worthwhile Investment and Favor Student Debt Forgiveness in New Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR) Poll**

Washington, D.C. — Amid the nationwide debate about the value of education and student debt programs, a new IWPR poll, conducted by Morning Consult, shows that more than three in four adults who attended college think their education was a worthwhile investment. The same poll showed that nearly twice as many adults support student loan forgiveness as oppose it, even if they themselves were not eligible for student debt programs. Overall, IWPR’s poll of 2,207 adults provides a comprehensive view of public sentiment on the barriers that many face as they seek access to higher education and the repercussions of recent Supreme Court decisions on student debt and affirmative action.

"Our findings highlight the enduring belief in education as a worthwhile investment, with 77% of adults who attended college expressing this sentiment," said **Nina Besser Doorley, IWPR Vice President of Policy and Strategic Initiatives.**

**Doorley** continued, "But while the majority recognizes education’s worth, barriers do remain stark. Cost is still a significant impediment, cited by 37% of adults, followed by the need to earn money and support their family (25%) and caregiving responsibilities (14%). And notably, one in four Black women identify racism as a barrier (26%), underscoring the deep-seated inequities that persist in our education system."

Key findings from the poll:

* **Student Debt Affecting Financial Stability:** A majority of Gen Z (53%) and Millennials (59%) who attended college report their student debt has affected their financial stability/security, as did 57% of all Black and Hispanic women student debt holders.
* **Support for Student Loan Forgiveness:** A larger proportion of adults (56%) support rather than oppose (31%) student loan forgiveness, transcending partisan lines and reflecting a shared understanding of the financial challenges faced by many.
* **Supreme Court's Decision on Loan Forgiveness:** A majority of Gen Z (62%) and Millennial (67%) student debt holders report their financial security is negatively affected by the Supreme Court's decision to block loan forgiveness. Moreover, nearly a third of all BIPOC women student debt holders report they will be negatively affected a *great* deal (30%).
* **Barriers to College Admissions:** A majority of adults believe there are still barriers to college admissions based on historical and systemic factors unrelated to students' merit (59%).
* **Impact of Supreme Court Affirmative Action Decision:** A majority of adults think the Supreme Court's decision to strike down affirmative action will impact access to higher education (55%), diversity on college campuses (55%), and the quality of higher education (51%).

“Higher education is often portrayed as the golden ticket to financial prosperity and security. But people clearly see two recent Supreme Court decisions on education—invalidating student debt relief and eliminating affirmative action programs—as hindering access to that opportunity. Higher education cannot be only for the wealthy and well-connected, and these poll results underscore the need for policymakers to prioritize solutions that open the doors to higher education for all,” stated **Doorley**.

For full poll results, please click [here](https://iwpr.org/poll-opinions-on-higher-education/).

The Institute for Women’s Policy Research strives to win economic equity for all women and eliminate barriers to their full participation in society. As a leading national think tank, IWPR builds evidence to shape policies that grow women’s power and influence, close inequality gaps, and improve the economic well-being of families. Learn more at [IWPR.org](https://iwpr.org/) and follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/IWPResearch).