

CHILDCARE WORKERS & STUDENT DEBT FACT SHEET

- ★ The average annual pay for a Childcare worker in New Jersey is \$19,886 a year, or approximately \$9.56 an hour. Meanwhile it can cost anywhere from about \$9,000 to \$20,000 or more per academic year to obtain a bachelor's degree in early childhood education.
- ★ With women holding 2/3 of all student debt, the student debt crisis is a gender justice issue.
- ★ The student debt crisis is a racial justice issue. Black borrowers pay significantly more for the same degrees than white borrowers.
- ★ Black women are hit the hardest because they hold the highest levels of student debt while earning \$0.61 for every \$1.00 a white man is paid. This extends the amount of time it takes for Black women to pay off their student debt and increases the total amount of interest that is paid.

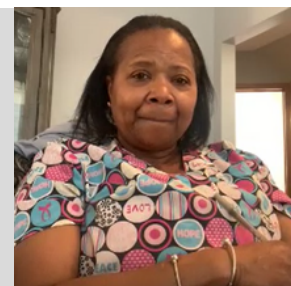
OUR STORIES

Amina is an early childhood education specialist who has nearly \$120,000 in student debt. She was recently forced out of the childcare industry because she could no longer afford the rent on her home where she provided childcare to working class families in Newark. Instead of using her degrees to provide early childhood education, she has been forced into the gig economy, delivering food and picking up occasional opportunities to consult and evaluate childcare programs.



Nicole is an early childhood education specialist teaching preschool at a large community services organization in Essex County. After earning her Masters Degree right here at Montclair State University, Nicole had \$40,000 in student debt. For the last decade she has paid her student loans every month on time. She calculated that she has paid a total of \$29,000 towards her student debt, but her principal balance has only decreased to \$35,000 - a mere \$5,000 reduction to show after nearly a decade of paying 6x that amount towards her student debt.

Marilyn earned her degree in education and became a teacher in Passaic County. She pursued her degree with the promise that her student debt would be cancelled after teaching in her school district. A year and a half after she was told her debt would be forgiven, she discovered this was not the case. Instead, she found out her loan was in default. As a result, her credit was negatively impacted, her interest rates increased, her car insurance increased, and her homeowners insurance went up. Marilyn cannot even co-sign on student loans for her daughter who would like to attend college.



OUR CAMPAIGN

NJ Communities United is part of a national movement calling on President Biden to cancel \$50,000 in federal student debt for all student loan borrowers. By canceling this debt, the President can dramatically change the lives of working-class families trapped by the pressures and consequences of student debt. Eliminating student debt for everyone would boost the economy by approximately \$100 billion a year for at least 10 years, yielding lower unemployment rates, increased spending, and more.

In addition, Congress must pass the College for All Act of 2021 introduced by Senator Bernie Sanders and Representative Pramila Jayapal on April 21, 2021. This legislation would make college accessible to working-class families and prevent another student debt crisis from emerging again in the future. Among other items, this visionary legislation would provide tuition-free community colleges for all students and tuition-free public four-year colleges and universities for students in families who earn less than \$125,000 a year.