



## **Advocacy Alert:**

### **Victory on Pell Grant Eligibility**

#### **THE ISSUE**

Before the recent legislative change, Pell Grants, the federal government's primary form of grant aid for low-income students, could only be used for education programs lasting at least 600 clock hours and 15 weeks. This restriction left out many short-term job training programs that could quickly prepare workers for high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand jobs. As a result, many individuals who needed fast, affordable training were unable to access the financial support necessary to enroll.

#### **AFS ADVOCACY**

Recognizing this gap, AFS actively pushed for reforms to expand Pell Grant eligibility. Through sustained engagement with lawmakers, coalition building, and policy advocacy, AFS worked to ensure that shorter programs, those between eight and 15 weeks long, would qualify for funding. This effort culminated in the inclusion of Workforce Pell legislation in the budget reconciliation bill passed by Congress on July 3, 2025.

#### **THE POSITIVE OUTCOME**

Starting July 1, 2026, thousands of workers each year will gain access to Pell Grants for short-term training programs. This change will help individuals afford education that provides rapid pathways to stable, well-paying jobs, while also helping employers meet demand for skilled labor. The expansion represents a significant step toward making career advancement more accessible and responsive to the evolving workforce needs.