

## Higher Education

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### ***Merit-based, Lottery-funded Scholarship in United States: Social Equity Implications***

**Friday 11:00 am; Panel 2**

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**Abstract:** Merit-based, lottery-funded scholarships for post-secondary education began in the United States in 1991. Since then, fifteen other states have followed suit creating a merit-based post-secondary scholarship program funded, at least in part, by each state's lottery revenues. Previous research studies have examined merit-based, lottery-funded programs using a broad range of perspectives, on a state-by-state basis. Despite these studies, none have broadly assessed the overall social equity aspects of each program in tandem. Using a social equity lens, this research will examine the impact merit-based, lottery funded scholarship programs have had on the overall educational attainment within individual states and regions of the country. After providing contextual background on these merit-based, lottery funded scholarships, this research will examine the varying social equity implications surrounding these programs, with a specific focus on the tradeoffs of universalist vs. selectivist approaches. Using data from the US Census Bureau and various sources of administrative data, this research will examine social equity dimensions of these state programs. This research will evaluate the programs by examining the following criteria: (1) are these programs providing greater access higher education; (2) what impact(s) are these programs having on the academic performance of the students within these program states; and (3) are these scholarship programs positively impacting the overall educational attainment within these states. Important public policy implications for these merit-based scholarship programs are expected to emerge.