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### **AAPI Adults Are Concerned about Changes to College Landscape and Intergenerational Progress**

*AAPI adults continue to view a college degree as integral to improving their future but are concerned with federal funding cuts to higher education. Overall, AAPI adults are more pessimistic about the state of the country, the national economy, and their own personal finances than they were in 2023.*

**Chicago, May 21, 2025** – In the midst of [ongoing economic uncertainty](#), a new AAPI Data/AP-NORC Poll finds few AAPI adults are optimistic about improving the standard of living for themselves and for future generations. Just 27% agree that people like them can improve their standard of living, and just 34% say it is likely that young people today will have a better standard of living than their parents.

AAPI adults [continue](#) to view a college degree as essential or important to improving their future prospects, including making it easier to change jobs in the long term (88%), getting a good job to support a family (88%), increasing wealth and minimizing debt (87%), and being an informed and engaged citizen (78%).

AAPI communities are concerned about many aspects of the higher education landscape. About 6 in 10 are concerned about increases in student loan debt (63%), restrictions on free speech on college campuses (57%), and federal government cuts to university research (56%). Most AAPI adults also oppose proposals to cut federal funding for campuses with DEI programs (65%) and to arrest or deport students involved with on-campus protests (62%). There is less opposition to cutting funding to universities accused of allowing antisemitic speech or for those allowing transgender athletes in women's sports. Still, more AAPI adults oppose than support these policies.

Among AAPI adults, those aged 18 to 29 are more likely than those over 30 to oppose certain federal actions on college campuses, including arresting or deporting students involved with on-campus protests and cutting federal funding to colleges and universities with DEI programs or that allow transgender athletes in women's sports.

When it comes to education in public K-12 schools, most AAPI adults are in favor of teaching about the history of AAPI communities in the U.S. (75%), the history of slavery, racism, and segregation (73%), and, although to a lesser degree, issues related to sex and sexuality (57%). Additionally, 6 in 10 oppose efforts by individual school boards to restrict which subjects teachers and students can discuss in the classroom. These findings are nearly identical to those from a [year ago](#).

"Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders remain steadfast in their beliefs about the importance of higher education," said Karthick Ramakrishnan, executive director of AAPI Data and researcher at the Asian American Research Center, University of California Berkeley. "AAPIs continue to view a college degree as important for long-term financial success and express significant concerns about cuts to university research and restrictions to free speech on college campuses."

Overall, AAPI adults are much more pessimistic about the overall state of the country and their own personal finances than they were a year and a half ago. About 7 in 10 think the way things are going in the country overall

(73%) and the national economy (74%) will get worse in the next year, and 51% expected their own personal finances to worsen. In [December 2023](#), about 4 in 10 thought the way things are going in the country overall and the national economy would get worse, and just 20% anticipated a decline in their personal finances.

Similar to [2023](#), only about a quarter of AAPI adults are very confident that they can keep up with their expenses (28%) or would be able to pay an unexpected medical expense (25%), and 2 in 10 are confident they have enough savings for their retirement (20%). Though many are somewhat confident. Confidence in finding a good job if someone wanted to is down compared to 2023. Half of AAPI adults are not confident they could find another job these days compared to a third who felt that way a year ago.

“While people’s short-term outlook on the country and national economy often shift when the White House switches party control, the increased pessimism in the AAPI community over intergenerational progress is notable,” said Jennifer Benz, deputy director of The AP-NORC Center. “Fully two-thirds of AAPI adults feel it’s unlikely that today’s youngest generation will be better off than their parents and half don’t see a pathway to improve their family’s standard of living in this country. These are indicators that speak directly to belief in the American Dream.”

The survey also reveals that 63% of AAPI adults would prefer a bigger government providing more services, while just 36% would prefer a smaller government with fewer services. About half say the government is spending too little on Medicare, Medicaid, and housing and food assistance for low-income people.

Many are skeptical that the government can spend taxes in the best interest of people like them. While overall confidence remains low, AAPI adults are more likely to express being somewhat confident in their state and local government, as well as their local school district. About 4 in 10 say they are somewhat confident in each of these groups, compared to just 18% who say the same about the federal government.

Two-thirds agree that higher income households pay too little in federal taxes. Conversely, most agree middle-income households (63%) and their own household (57%) pay too much, and about half agree that lower-income households pay too much (48%). And about 6 in 10 would favor tax cuts for lower-income and middle-income households, as well as small businesses, while two-thirds would oppose tax cuts for higher-income households and large corporations.

### **About the Study**

The nationwide study was conducted by The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and AAPI Data from April 7–14, 2025, using the Amplify AAPI Monthly survey drawing from NORC’s Amplify AAPI® Panel designed to be representative of the U.S. Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander household population. Online and telephone interviews were offered in English, the Chinese dialects of Mandarin and Cantonese, Vietnamese, and Korean with 1,094 Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders aged 18 and older living in the United States. The margin of sampling error is +/- 4.8 percentage points.

### **About the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research**

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#### **About AAPI Data**

AAPI Data is a leading research and policy organization producing accurate data to shift narratives and drive action toward enduring solutions for Asian American (AA) and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (NHPI) communities across the nation. AAPI Data aspires to transform public and private systems to ensure that all AA and NHPI communities are recognized, valued, and prioritized. Learn more at [aapidata.com](http://aapidata.com). Email [press@aapidata.com](mailto:press@aapidata.com) for more questions.

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