

U.S. News & World Report Names Avila University a Top Performer on Social Mobility

#51 in Top Performers on Social Mobility for Midwest regional institutions in the 2022-2023 edition of Best Colleges

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- After assessing an all-time high of 1,500 U.S. bachelor's degree-granting institutions on 17 measures of academic quality, [U.S. News & World Report](#) has named [Avila University](#) #51 in Top Performers on Social Mobility for Midwest regional institutions in the 2022-2023 edition of Best Colleges. While a college degree is still considered the surest path toward social mobility in the United States, the ranking shows that for economically stressed students, some universities are better suited to serve their unique situations.



Avila University sits on 50-acres in suburban Kansas City, Missouri



“Economically disadvantaged students are less likely than others to finish college, even when controlling for other characteristics. But some colleges are more successful than others at advancing social mobility by enrolling and graduating large proportions of disadvantaged students awarded with Pell Grants” (U.S. News & World Report).

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Student success has an immediate and generational impact on students' lives, their families, and the Kansas City region.”

Avila Director of Institutional Effectiveness Craig Haile, Ph.D.

“Although social mobility can be defined in many ways, it is most often quantitatively measured through economic mobility,” said Avila Director of Institutional Effectiveness Craig Haile, Ph.D.

“Avila provides degree and certificate programs that are in high demand and needed in the KC community; thus, our graduates are able to secure jobs and advance their careers with the skills

and credentials they receive at Avila,” said Haile. Recent enrollment partnerships with KC Scholars, InUni, Academic Partnership (AP), and K-12 Teachers Alliance came into reality because of the shared value of providing greater access to a college degree. These commitments to providing students with a path to success help solidify Avila as Kansas City’s university of access.

“Avila’s focus on being the university of access means that the institution is committed to reaching students for whom a college education can have the greatest impact,” said Haile. “Avila provides access and support for determined students with tremendous potential. Having these students succeed will have immediate and long-term effects on their lives, the lives of their families, and on the KC region as a whole for multiple generations, as research has shown that educational advantage is persistent to future generations.”

Leveling the post-graduation playing field

The [New York Times](#) echoes the importance a college degree can have on social mobility, “A new study, based on millions of anonymous tax records, shows that some colleges are even more economically segregated than previously understood, while others are associated with income mobility.”

This study ranked several universities on economic diversity and student outcomes. When compared to its peers, Avila University ranked 9th out of 56 colleges in Missouri as median individual income [of graduates] at age 34, and 22nd out of 56 colleges in Missouri on the overall mobility index [of graduates]. “This measure reflects both access and outcomes, representing the likelihood that a student from Avila moved up two or more income quintiles.”

“A survey of recent graduates (academic year 2019-20 and 2020-21) showed that even in the midst of the pandemic that over 95% of our graduates had a “positive career outcome” in the first six months post-graduation as defined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, meaning they were employed or enrolled in graduate school. Over 85% felt they were doing as well or better economically than their parents at the same age, and over 85% felt they would do as well or better economically in the long run,” said Haile.

When looking at the positive economic impact of its degrees, Avila University is one of the best universities in the country for social mobility. By providing access and support for students, Avila’s commitment to opportunity and student success means its graduates are more likely to improve their economic standing. “Interestingly, there was no significant difference in average starting graduate salary regardless of their family household income bracket, indicating that our graduates born into families at the bottom of the income distribution are able to be on a level playing field with wealthier peers,” said Haile.

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