



With the mission of eliminating the barriers associated with entering the post-secondary pipeline, tnAchieves launched as a universal last-dollar community and technical college scholarship that paired students with volunteer mentors and required its students to complete at least 8 hours of community service each semester. The founders of tnAchieves understood that students, particularly at-risk students, need more than funding to complete college; therefore, tnAchieves offers a holistic approach to student access and success by providing wrap-around supports to students in an effort to increase Tennessee's post-secondary attainment rate.

From 2008-2014, tnAchieves supported more than 10,000 students into a community or technical college with more than \$15.5M privately raised exclusively for last-dollar student scholarships. Our statistics indicate that our students are retaining and graduating at a rate 50 percent greater than state averages. This is particularly important when you consider 65 percent of tnAchieves students are first generation college attendees and 70 percent come from families who earn less than \$50,000 annually. Moreover, while the nation laments the student debt crisis, here in Tennessee we have identified a solution as 94 percent of our graduates reported they completed post-secondary debt free.

Understanding this success, but faced with the reality that only 32.9 percent of Tennesseans held a post-secondary degree, the state launched the Drive to 55 campaign which seeks to comprehensively improve its higher education policies by achieving 55 percent post-secondary attainment by 2025.

Modeled after tnAchieves, TN Promise was launched under the Drive to 55 umbrella to ensure no student would be limited from the pursuit of a post-secondary degree because of socio-economic status, zip code, or background.

tnAchieves currently serves as the partnering organization to Tennessee Promise in 85 counties. The program established 85 county-based advisory councils comprised of local higher education, secondary education, and business leaders as well as public officials to ensure local ownership and sustainability. tnAchieves annually recruits and trains nearly 7,500 volunteers to serve as mentors to nearly 60,000 TN Promise applicants as they transitioned from high school to college.

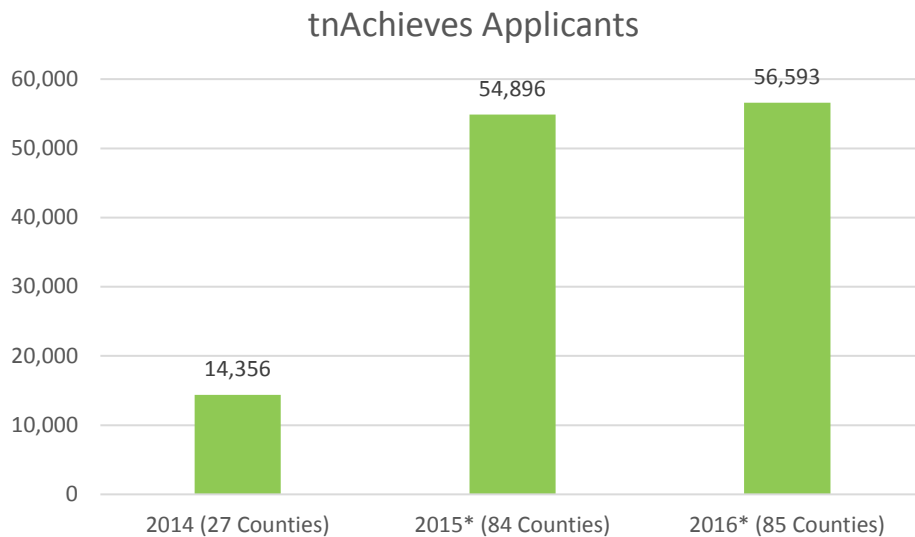
Because of increased supports by tnAchieves and other programs, Tennessee leads the nation in FAFSA filing. In fact, the state had the highest year over year gain in percentage of students who filed FAFSA and accounted for more than 40 percent in FAFSA growth across the entire country in 2015. With 16,291 students from the Class of 2015 attending an eligible institution as a part of TN Promise, the community colleges experienced a 24 percent increase of full-time students while technical college enrollment increased more than 20 percent. This represents a 10 percent overall increase in Tennessee public higher education enrollment, and an unprecedented 4.6 percent increase in the state's college-going rate. This increase is more than the last 7 years combined!

Although TN Promise created an endowment for student scholarships, tnAchieves continues to provide all the supports necessary for student success. From filing financial aid to hosting summer bridge programs for remedial students, nearly every senior across Tennessee engages with tnAchieves as part of their journey from high school through college. The following pages outline its scope of work as a partner to the State of Tennessee.

tnAchieves: Scope of Work

1. Recruit Students

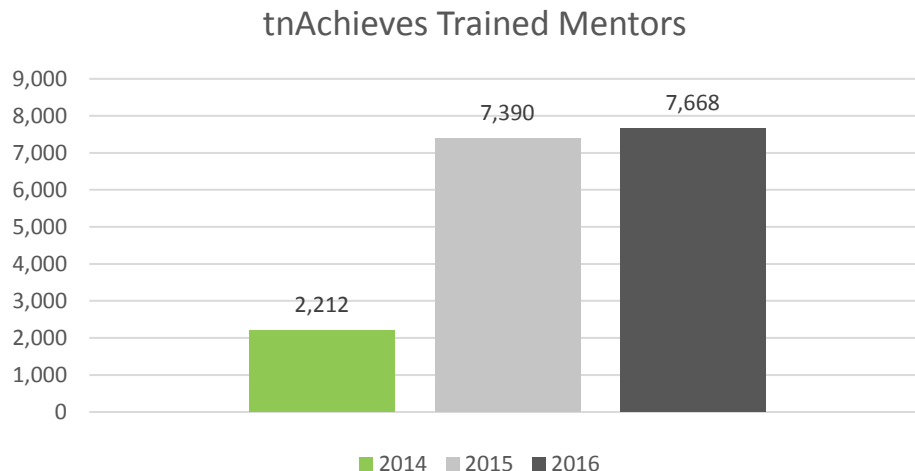
- a. tnAchieves attends senior and junior nights, college fairs, and school assemblies to promote the program. Between August and October, tnAchieves visited every public high school and many private schools to ensure all students were aware of the opportunity.



*This represents only the number of TN Promise applicants served by tnAchieves.

2. Recruit Mentors

- a. tnAchieves recruited 9,484 volunteer mentors from across the state to meet TN Promise applicant demand.



3. Train Mentors

- a. During the months of October through January, tnAchieves conducted 203 in-person mentor trainings and 20 webinars and provided internally-created mentor handbooks to all volunteers.

4. Retain Mentors

- a. tnAchieves implemented a mentor recognition program which provides mentors opportunities to engage with the program in several different ways. Mentors can assist at team meetings, watch monthly webinars (April’s webinar received 100% mentor approval.), provide job shadowing opportunities and nominate community service days. tnAchieves will also be co-hosting events with ECD and its business partners to provide information on workforce needs and desired majors from large employers around the state.

5. Conduct Mentor Breakfasts

- a. In concert with the post-secondary institutions, tnAchieves hosted a mentor breakfast at 14 community colleges/TCATs to better familiarize mentors with the individual processes for the post-secondary institutions.

6. Manage Local Advisory Councils

- a. tnAchieves hosts an annual local advisory council meeting in each of its 85 counties. Currently, tnAchieves has 627 local advisory council members including county mayors, directors of schools, chamber presidents, and other local community leaders.

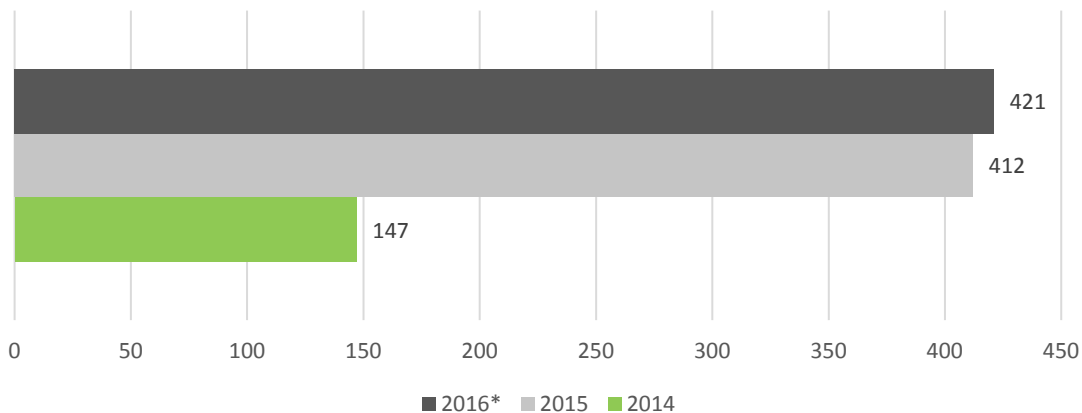
7. Pair Applicants with Mentors

- a. tnAchieves currently serves 95 percent of the 59,635 TN Promise applicants. Each of the 38,319 applicants who met the FAFSA deadline were paired with a volunteer mentor based on high school of choice.

8. Coordinate all Meetings with Counselors

- a. Prior to printing 57,000 student handbooks, tnAchieves established and confirmed dates, times, and locations of all team meetings.

tnAchieves High Schools



*337 without private/homeschool

9. Meet with Applicants at School Assemblies in November

- a. tnAchieves met with all TN Promise applicants at an in-school assembly throughout the month of November to discuss policies, meetings, and deadlines as well as personally distribute internally-created student handbooks.

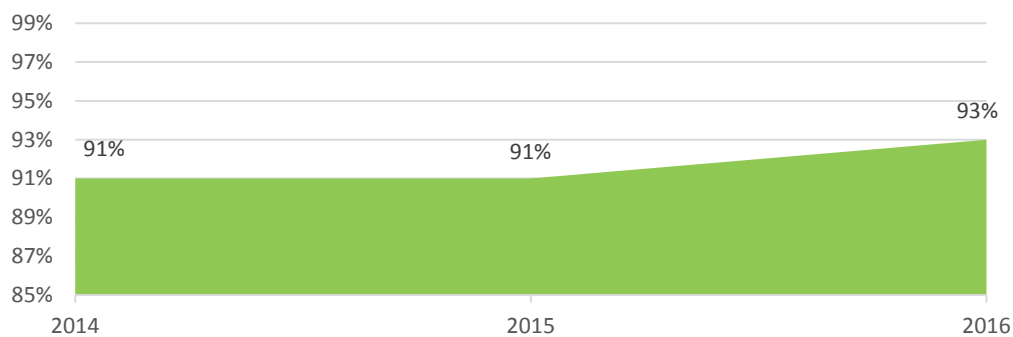
10. Meet with Applicants at Team Meetings in January/February

- a. tnAchieves conducted 286 meetings with students prior to the February 22nd FAFSA filing deadline.

11. Assist with FAFSA filing at Financial Aid Events

- a. To ensure every student properly completes the FAFSA, tnAchieves attended FAFSA days hosted by the post-secondary institutions to assist families with the filing process.

tnAchieves FAFSA file rate



- b. Tennessee is currently leading the nation in FAFSA filing rate with 68 percent of all students completing a FAFSA. In 2015, Tennessee accounted for 40 percent of the nation’s overall growth in FAFSA completion.

12. Meet with Applicants at Team Meetings with Mentors in March/April

- a. tnAchieves conducted 286 meetings with students and mentors to continue the discussion of the transition from high school into post-secondary.

13. Promote Completion of Admissions Paperwork and Financial Aid Verification

- a. Between the months of April and July, tnAchieves ensures eligible applicants complete all admissions and financial aid paperwork with email, text, and phone call reminders.

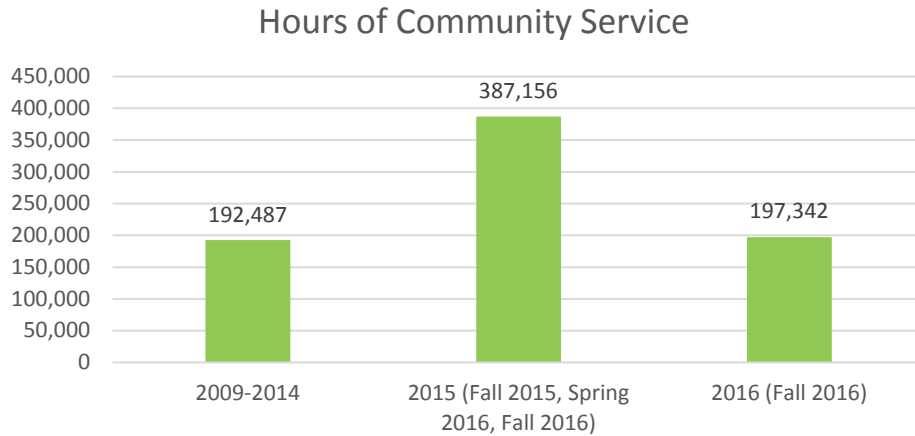
14. Conduct Summer Bridge Program

- a. tnAchieves conducted 13 three-week summer bridge programs for students who require learning support classes.

	Number of students served	Percent improved/tested out	Fall-Fall retention
2013	73	95%	90%
2014	123	97%	87%
2015	554	93%	
2016	613	89%	

15. Host Community Service Events and Maintain Database

- a. tnAchieves hosted community service events across the state, continued to filter possible opportunities for students in every county and monitored student activity to ensure all students are appropriately meeting the requirement. Since 2009, our students have completed 776,985 community service hours.



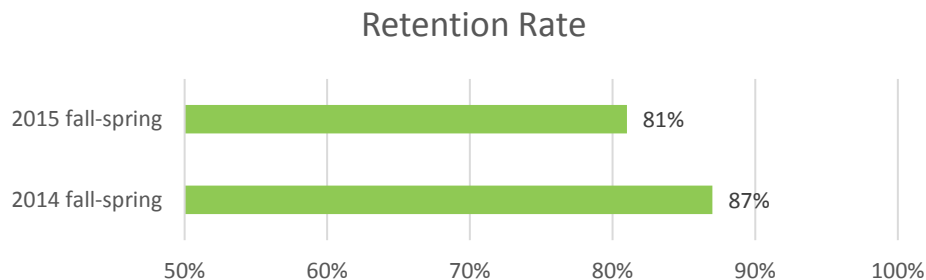
16. Restructure Retention and Completion Efforts

- a. Understanding that each student enters college with a unique set of strengths, abilities, and needs, tnAchieves developed a targeted approach for student communication and intervention starting with the Class of 2015.
- b. In collaboration with the University of Tennessee’s Center for Business & Economic Research, tnAchieves has assessed individual student risk and created 57 cohorts based on multiple risk factors including household income, previous academic performance, and the college in which each student is enrolled. Throughout the academic year, students have received emails, surveys, and responsive texts based on the strengths, abilities, and needs common to students in their assigned cohort.

17. Develop New Retention and Completion Efforts through Completion Teams

- a. In an effort to continue strengthening our retention and completion outcomes, tnAchieves is in the process of creating Completion Teams focused on developing and testing innovative communication strategies for the Class of 2016. Completion Teams will engage students by addressing *the why*:
 - i. Why am I college material?
 - ii. Why should I put forth effort to succeed?
 - iii. Why should college matter to me?

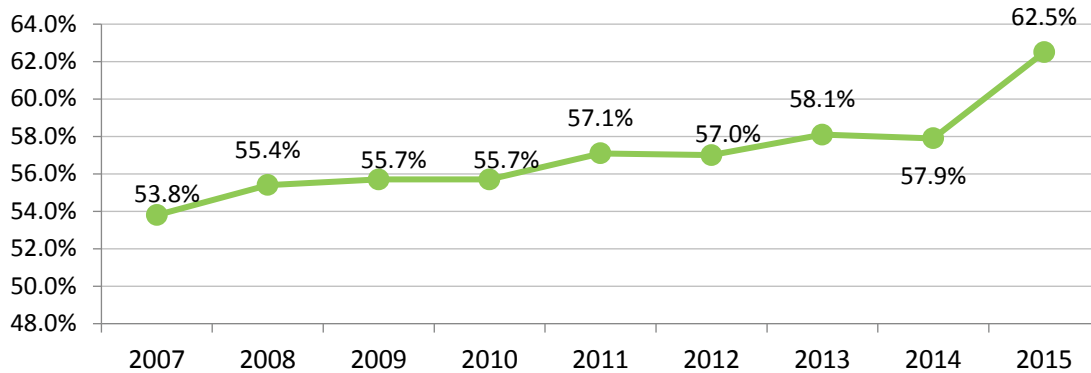
18. Focus on Retention Rates



19. Increase Enrollment and College-Going Rates

- a. TN Promise resulted in a 24 percent increase at community colleges, 20 percent increase at TCATs, and a 10 percent overall increase of students at a Tennessee higher education institution. This led to a 4.6% increase in the state's college-going rate. This one year increase is larger than the previous 7 years combined.

College-Going Rate of Tennessee High School Graduates



20. Collecting Student Success Stories

Going to college would have been almost impossible for me without your help. I was the first person in my family to go to college. Being able to attend college and work without the stress of a large amount of debt was invaluable to me and my parents. I know the associate's degree I received made the difference when I began applying for jobs.

Cody Mitchell, Knox County

tnAchieves has allowed me to discover things about myself I never knew I was capable of. Without this program, I would not have had the chance to start building a pathway to my career as an animal science major at Walters State and finish my degree at UT. tnAchieves allowed me to achieve my goals. Now I am proud to say I am a tnAchieves mentor and I plan to be one for a long time.

Victoria McCarter, Sevier County

As a first-generation student, who do you go to about college? You can't go to your parents; they don't know. It's scary when you get to college because you think, "No one else has been through this, and I do not know who to go to." But you have everybody from tnAchieves to help you. When you finally start asking questions and you know who to go to, it's not scary at all. When your little brother starts asking questions about college, he doesn't have to go to anyone else because you have the answers for him. That's pretty awesome. It's because of tnAchieves I no longer have dreams, I have goals.

Stefanie Hernandez, Shelby County

With tnAchieves I have learned to value education, the benefits that the community can give and the faith the community can have in students who want to receive a degree in the state of Tennessee. I look forward to the day in which I can work as a mentor for incoming tnAchieves students, so I can express the impact and the success that tnAchieves has had on my life and can have on theirs.

Andrew Frantz, Knox County

Because this program helped me get started, I was able to go above and beyond what most people in my hometown dream of accomplishing. I put my mind to earning a degree, and my outcome was determined not by my childhood financial situation but by how hard I worked. I want this same opportunity for other students.

Virginia Hughes, Blount County