



## An Introduction to Chipola College



Chipola College is a public, open-admissions institution in Marianna, Florida, serving Calhoun, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, and Washington counties. Located in the heart of the Florida Panhandle, 70 miles west of Tallahassee and about 60 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, Chipola College began was established as the third oldest of Florida's 28 state-supported community colleges. The institution's name was changed from Chipola Junior College in 2003, after the Florida Legislature granted permission for Chipola to offer selected baccalaureate degrees to address documented workforce needs in the region. The blue-green Chipola River, which flows within a mile of the campus, was named by the original Native American inhabitants of the area. The word *Chipola* is thought to mean *upstream*.

The college opened its doors in 1946 as a private institution with six full-time teachers and 65 students. Chipola was brought under state control and financing in 1947 when Florida's Minimum Foundation Law provided for public support and initiated a plan to place at least two years of college education within commuting distance of every Florida citizen. The original district of Calhoun, Jackson, and Washington counties was later expanded to include Holmes and Liberty counties. The college's original function as an Associate in Arts degree-granting institution was expanded to include Workforce Education in 1967-68. In January 2004, Chipola enrolled its first students in the new Teacher Education Program to earn the Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education with emphasis in math or science. Most graduates of this program will enter teaching careers in middle and high school math and science classrooms in the local area.

Chipola's first permanent buildings were completed and occupied in 1954, but additions through the years have created a complex of 31 buildings, arranged on a wooded campus, covering about 50 acres of 120-acre tract. The remainder is in its natural state—covered with pines, cedars, and hardwoods. The campus also includes outdoor physical education fields and a pool. There are six buildings at off-campus sites.

The college's five-county district occupies 3,445 square miles abounding in forests, rivers, and lakes. The main economic base of the district is agriculture and forestry. The district is bordered on the north by the Alabama state line, the east by the Chattahoochee River, and the west by the Chattahoochee River. The district includes a few manufacturing sites and several state agencies, including a Florida Department of Transportation District Office, a Federal prison, and seven state prisons.

### **Primary Audience**

Chipola literally "lives and moves and has its being" in what has been termed by university educators as the "educational backwater of Florida." There is not a single beach, condominium, or orange grove in the entire district. In fact, the establishment of Chipola met such great need that in the 1950s the U.S. Department of Education coined the term "Chipola Index," a measure of the effect that having a community college in a rural geographic area would have on the number of residents who go to college.

In 2000 the total population of the area was 108,436. The district experienced a documented population growth of 12.82 percent during a recent ten-year period, while Florida's state population growth for the same period averaged 33.3 percent. The average Florida population growth rate for the year was 1.84 percent; for the Chipola region, it was .47 percent. A small population, low population density, and slow growth have caused the district to retain its essentially rural nature in a period when Florida shows the second largest population increase in the nation (*Florida Trend Economic Yearbook*, April 2005). Liberty County experienced a loss in population during the first five years of the decade. Chipola is the only source of public comprehensive postsecondary educational opportunity in its district. The college is committed to meeting the needs of a student population, with increasing numbers of low-income, nontraditional, older, part-time students seeking education and skills for the job market. As the community's resource for productivity and advancement, Chipola College seeks to mitigate the poverty and declining economic and social conditions that characterize the area.

Every semester, between 90 and 95 percent of Chipola's students come from this district where the annual per capita personal income recently ranged from a high of \$21,673 in Jackson County to a low of \$18,295 in Liberty. The state average for the same year was \$32,662 (*Florida Trend*, April 2005). This means that Jackson County, the cultural and industrial hub of the college district, has a per capita personal income which is only 66 percent of the state average. The low end of the range includes Calhoun County, where the per capita personal

income is only 56 percent of the state average. Chipola is committed to maintaining a positive learning environment – one in which personnel, resources, facilities, and services contribute to the growth and development of students from an area which was once referred to as “Lower Appalachia.”

<b>Table 1 – County Profiles Compared to Florida</b>						
	Calhoun	Holmes	Jackson	Liberty	Washington	Florida
Population 2000	13,017	18,564	46,755	7,021	20,973	15,982,376
Population, percent change, 1990 to 2000	18.2%	17.7%	13.0%	26.1%	24.0%	23.5%
White persons, percent, 2000	79.9%	89.8%	70.2%	76.4%	81.7%	78.05%
Non-White persons	20.1%	10.2%	29.8%	23.6%	18.3%	22%
Households, 2000	4,468	6,921	16,620	2,222	7,931	6,337,929
Persons per household, 2000	2.53	2.43	2.44	2.51	2.46	2.46
Median household money income, 1997-model-based estimate	\$25,362	\$23,416	\$25,953	\$27,178	\$25,224	\$32,877
Persons below poverty, percent, 1997-model-based estimate	23.0%	24.7%	20.8%	22.3%	22.5%	14.4%
Land Area, 2000 (square miles)	567	482	916	836	580	53,927
Persons per square mile	23.0	38.5	51.0	8.4	36.2	296.4

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

**Table 2 – District County Population and Median Per Capita Income Compared to Florida**

	Calhoun	Holmes	Jackson	Liberty	Washington	Florida
Population	18,805	19,332	47,162	7,072	22,065	17,612,584
Population Percent change from 2000 Census Bureau	-.98%	4%	.48%	.91%	5.2%	11%
Median Per Capita Income	18,348	19,149	21,673	18,295	19,042	32,662
Federal Poverty Guidelines for LLSI – family of 4 *	\$19,350					

\* Federal Register, Vol. 70, No. 33 / 2005 / Notices

Source: Florida Trend Economic Yearbook Comparison, 2005

### Chipola College Vision and Mission

**Vision:** Chipola College promotes learning and student achievement through excellence, opportunity, diversity, and progress.

**Mission:** Chipola is a comprehensive public college whose mission is to provide accessible, affordable, quality educational opportunities to the residents of Calhoun, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, and Washington counties and to all others who choose to attend. The college creates a student-centered atmosphere of educational excellence and maintains an intellectual environment which inspires the full development of each individual's goals, abilities and interests. Because there is no substitute for quality instruction, the college empowers faculty members to establish and achieve the highest possible standards. The college also promotes a strong working relationship with communities, businesses, state agencies, and other educational institutions.

Chipola provides the following:

- Educational programs which include general and pre-professional classes leading to the Associate in Arts degree for transfer into baccalaureate degree programs;
- Selected Baccalaureate degree programs which produce educated and capable professionals;
- Workforce Development programs leading to Associate in Science degrees, Associate in Applied Science degrees, and Certificates of Training to prepare students for careers;
- Continuing Education programs related to professional and personal development; and
- A broad range of enrollment and student services and instructional and administrative support to facilitate student success.

*--Adopted June 15, 2004, Chipola College Board of Trustees*

### Level, Control and Affiliation

As part of the Florida Community College System, Chipola operates under the direction of a nine-member District Board of Trustees, appointed by the Governor to four-year renewable terms. Board members represent the five counties in the college district. The college operates

under regulations of the State of Florida, the policies set forth by the District Board of Trustees, and *The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

**Programs of Study (See the 2006-2007 Chipola College Catalog, available online at [www.chipola.edu](http://www.chipola.edu))**

Chipola College offers four types of degrees: Baccalaureate (four-year/BS), Associate in Arts (two-year/AA), Associate in Science (two-year/AS), and Associate in Applied Science (two-year/AAS) degrees.

**B.S. Degrees** are offered through Chipola's Teacher Education Program. The Bachelor of Science in Education prepares students to teach mathematics and/or science in middle and/or high school. Admission requirements include an AA from a regionally accredited institution or at least 60 semester credit hours of postsecondary education with completion of the general studies requirement. Completion of all lower division state mandated common prerequisites includes the three Education courses, EDF 1005, EDG 2701, EME 2040. A grade point average of 2.5 in lower division coursework is required in addition to demonstrated proficiency in state mandated General Knowledge content through satisfactory completion of all four parts of the CLAST examination or the General Knowledge part of the Florida Teachers Certification Exam.

**A.A. Degree / University Transfer** programs parallel the first two years of four-year curricula in Florida's state universities. The Associate in Arts degree requires students to complete 60 semester hours and take a common core of courses in communications (12 semester hours), mathematics (6 semester hours), natural sciences (6 semester hours), social sciences (6 semester hours), and humanities (6 semester hours). Electives are available, but all are not offered every semester, and budget cuts have required the removal of several specialized courses in each department. A strong articulation agreement based on state statutes guarantees that any student earning an A.A. degree from Chipola will be accepted for upper division course work in one of the state's universities.

**Workforce Development** programs provide the following choices:

1. **Associate in Science and Associate in Applied Science Degrees** prepare students for careers after two years of training. Students follow a Workforce Development curriculum guide and are not required to take the College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST). Students seeking an AS or AAS toward a baccalaureate degree must complete the core academic curriculum and pass the CLAST. Chipola offers 16 Associate in

Science and Associate in Applied Science degree programs, which are identified in the current college catalog. Two of the AS degrees at Chipola, Nursing and Business Administration, are covered in the state's "career ladder agreement." Under this agreement, students who complete these programs are guaranteed admission to one of the state colleges or universities in the program designated to articulate with their degree, with restrictions set forth by the State University System.

2. **Workforce Development Certificate** programs are for students who want one or two years of specialized training in a career field before entering the job market. These programs also provide additional training for people already employed. Workforce Development certificate programs are competency-based and are generally guided by the number of clock-hours spent in class. The programs last from one to two years and are intended to place students in jobs at completion. Several certificate programs require students to pass state licensing examinations. Some certificate programs combine extensive laboratory experiences with college credit courses. Chipola offers 15 Workforce Development certificates, which are identified in the current college catalog.
  - 2.a. ***Students who have completed Workforce Development coursework*** may transfer this coursework toward an AS Degree in specific programs. The courses are treated like transfer credit. This program applies to specific programs of study on campus. Applicants must initiate this process through Admissions and Records to ensure all requirements are met prior to transfer of credit.
  - 2.b. ***High School graduates who complete a Tech Prep*** program of study in business may receive credit-by-exam for selected courses in which are included in the Associate in Science degree, Associate in Applied Science degree, or Workforce Development Certificate programs. Testing must be completed prior to first semester enrollment.
3. **Continuing Education and Public Service** programs provide learning opportunities for students who wish to improve skills for a particular job or train for a different job. Additionally, students wishing to pursue personal interests, recreation, or self-improvement find a wide choice of available classes, short courses, or seminars. In recent years Continuing Education and Public Service courses and seminars have been offered to from 3,000 to 4,000 students annually.

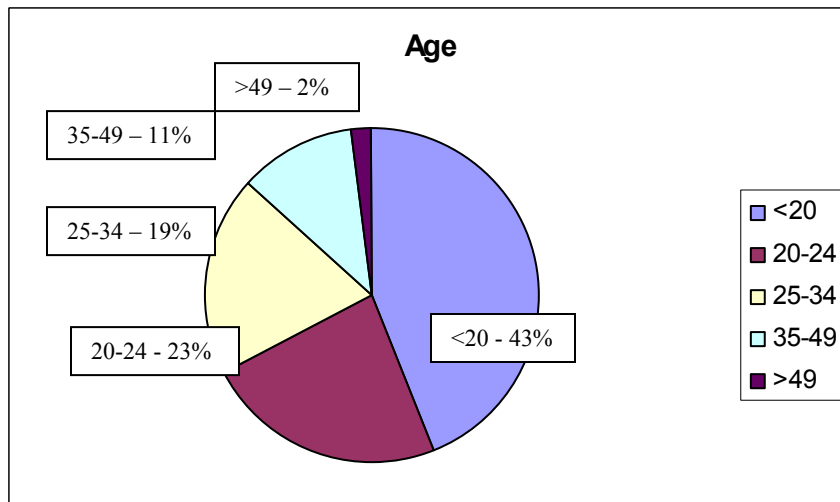
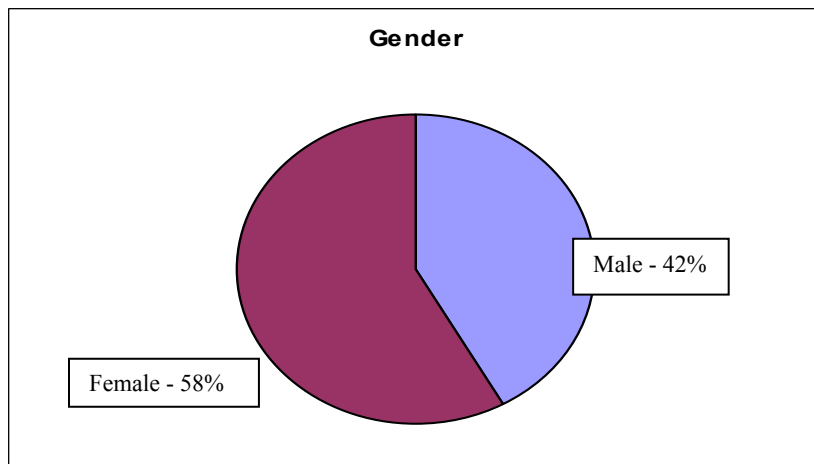
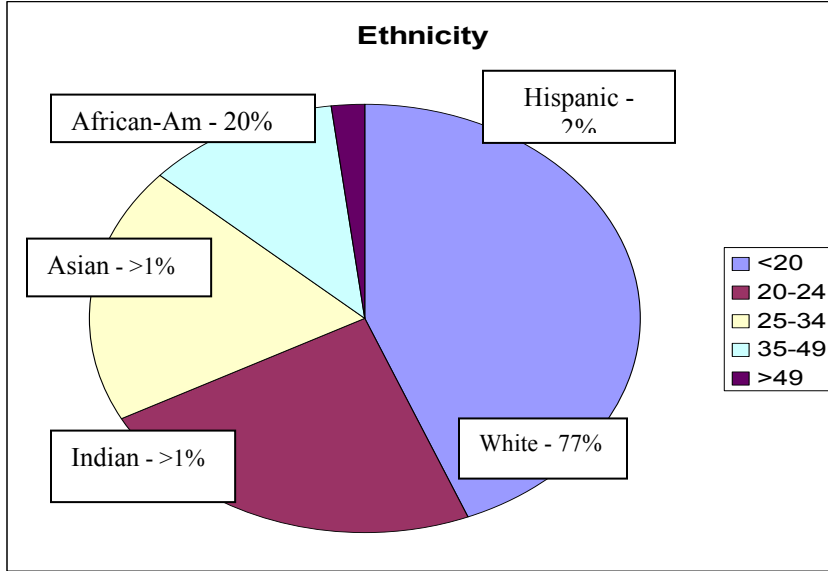
(See the *2006-2007 Chipola College Catalog* and Curriculum Guides for specific degrees and certificates. Contact the Student Services Department for program requirements, curriculum guides, and pre-requisites for each of the eleven state universities.)

### **Characteristics of Chipola's Student Body**

The ethnicity, age, and gender profile in Illustration 2 shows general student population characteristics during the 2005-2006 school year.

## Illustration 2 – Student Population Profile

### Ethnicity, Gender, Age

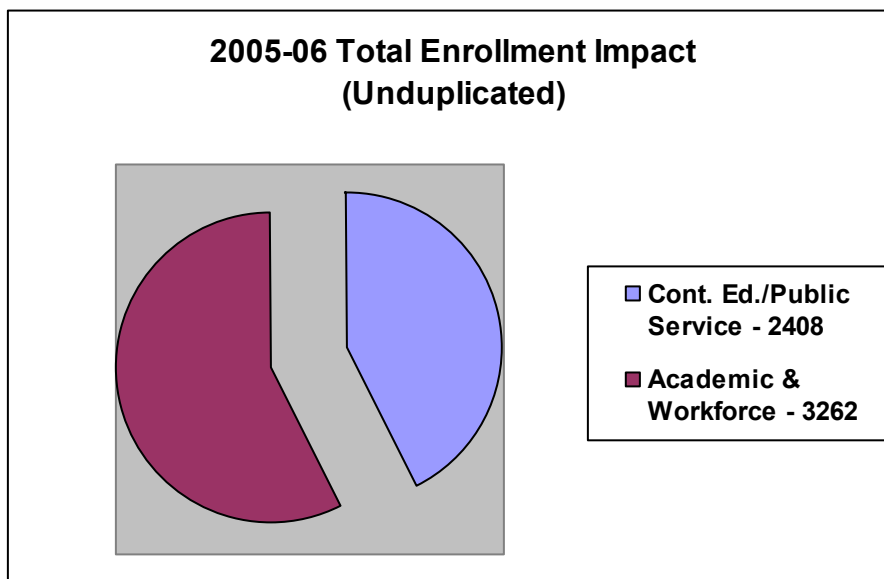


In recent years headcount enrollment in regular programs has ranged from 2,300 to 3,200 annually. Of these students, 90 percent commuted, many from 40 to 50 miles (one way) each day, 75 percent were employed while enrolled in classes, and 81 percent received scholarships or another form of financial aid.

In 2005-2006, 3,262 students were enrolled in regular academic and Workforce programs. During the same year, 2,408 students enrolled in non-credit Continuing Education and Public Services courses.

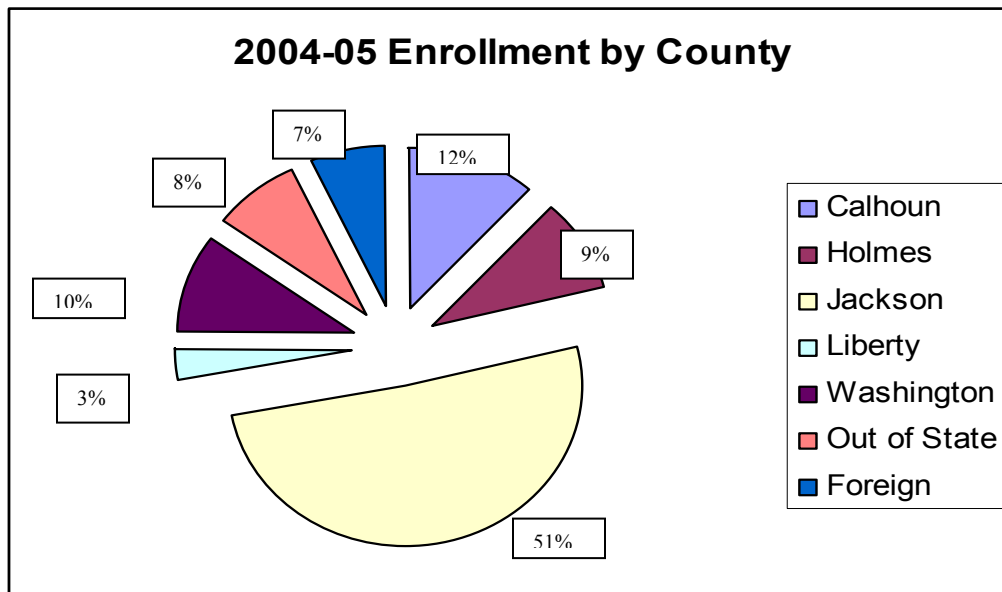
The ratio of headcount enrollment of students in regular programs consistently remains around 80% academic and 20% workforce development. The total community enrollment impact is illustrated in Illustration 3.

**Illustration 3**



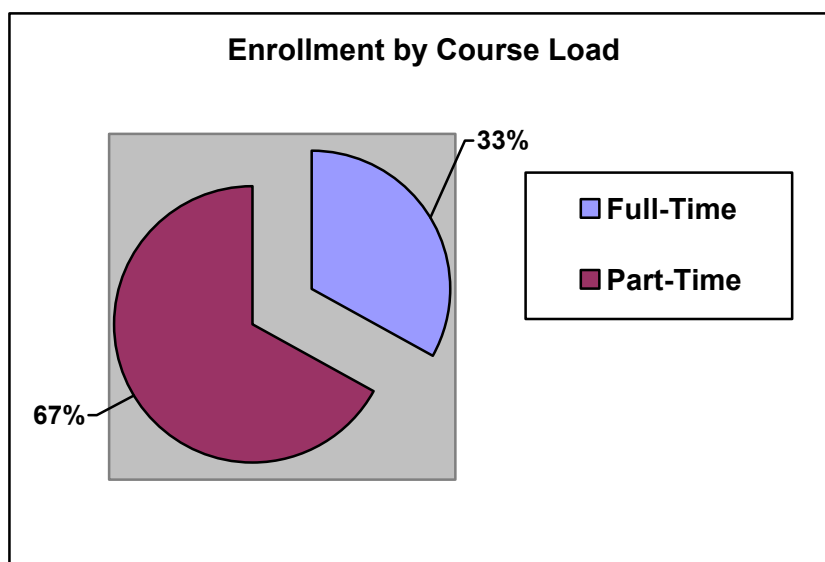
As shown in Illustration 4, students enrolled in 2004-05 resided mainly in the five counties in the college's district, as follows, Jackson, 51 percent; Calhoun, 12 percent; Washington, 10 percent; Holmes, nine percent; and Liberty, three percent. About 15 percent came from outside Florida, including 69 international students. Because the college district borders Alabama and Georgia, tuition costs for students from those states are only one dollar higher per semester hour than costs for Florida residents.

**Illustration 4**



As shown below in Illustration 5, about 33% of Chipola's students are enrolled on a full-time basis (at least 12 semester hours in academic courses or 450 clock-hours in Workforce Development courses). The remaining 67% attend part-time. During a typical semester, roughly 67 percent attend daytime classes, 14 percent attend only evening classes, and the remaining 19 percent attend both.

**Illustration 5**



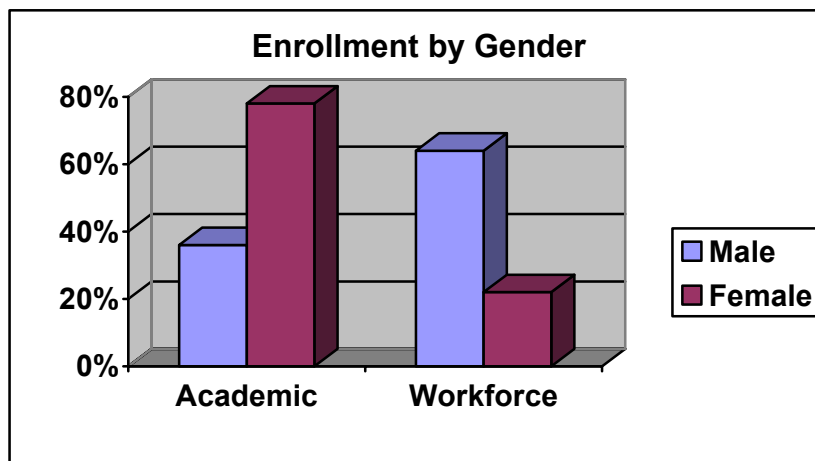
The average age of Chipola’s students continues to get younger. Over half the students (headcount) are age 21 or under. More than one fourth range in age from 22 to 34. The remaining students are at least 35 years old. Shown below in Illustration 6 is an enrollment breakdown by age of the student population.

**Illustration 6**

<b>Unduplicated Enrollment Breakdown by Age</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>All degree and certificate students</b>
Under 18	14%
18-19	29%
20-21	13%
22-24	11%
25-29	12%
30-34	7%
35-39	5%
40-49	7%
50-64	2%
65 and over	1%

Illustration 7 shows that the number of female students in academic (transfer track) programs is 28 percent higher than the number of males; however, there are 32 percent more males than females in Workforce Development programs. About 23 percent of Chipola’s students come from minority ethnic groups, while the area’s minority population is around 24 percent.

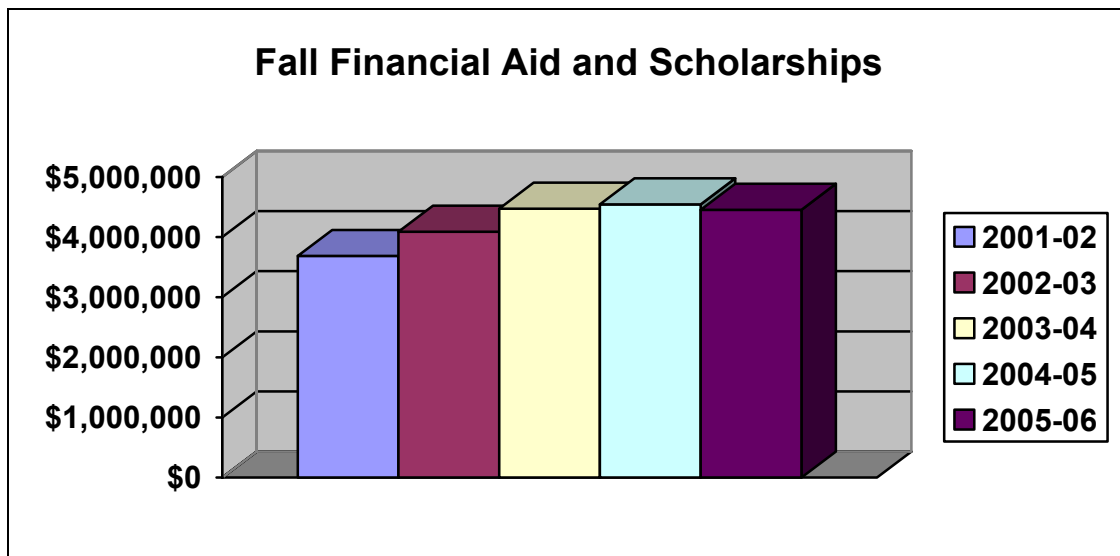
**Illustration 7**



Financial aid data for 2005-06 reveal that 1,181 students received 1,470 awards of financial assistance through federal or state grants and loans. These students represent a large percentage of the actual full and half-time student enrollment. In addition, the Chipola College Foundation provided 1,446 awards, which translated to \$920,249 in scholarships and grants. This reflects the college's recent efforts to retain students in programs for as long as possible by ensuring that all qualified students receive financial aid. The table below and Illustration 8 shows Financial Aid Office disbursements over the last five years.

<b>TOTAL AWARDS ALL PROGRAMS/TOTAL UNDUPLICATED RECIPIENTS</b>			
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>AWARDS FOR ALL PROGRAMS (Including Foundation Awards)</b>	<b>TOTAL AWARDED</b>	<b>UNDUPLICATED RECIPIENTS</b>
2001-02	2779	\$3,687,050	1287
2002-03	2883	\$4,089,828	1367
2003-04	3006	\$4,472,863	1480
2004-05	2910	\$4,545,128	1413
2005-06	2841	\$4,454,944	1342

**Illustration 8**



### **Characteristics of Faculty**

One of Chipola's greatest assets is its qualified faculty. According to the most recent "Florida Community College Instructional Activity Report" (2004), full-time faculty taught 74.6

percent of Chipola's AA degree credit hour classes. During a recent academic year, 28 percent of Chipola's faculty held earned doctorates, 46 percent held Master's degrees, three percent held Education Specialist degrees, and 12 percent were working on higher level degrees. Faculty members have received prestigious teaching awards and have won state and regional recognition for several instructional projects at Chipola. Faculty members also regularly participate as presenters at state meetings and conduct in-service activities for public school teachers in the college district.

### **Class Schedule**

At the request of students, most classes are scheduled from 7:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. All departments schedule classes Monday through Thursday evenings. Saturday classes are offered in some departments. Every effort is made to provide a schedule which allows evening and part-time students to complete their programs of study. Classes are taught year-round during fall and spring semesters of 16 weeks, two six-week summer sessions, and one eleven week summer session.

### **Chipola's Challenge**

Chipola takes seriously its commitment to "create a student-centered atmosphere of educational excellence and maintains an intellectual environment which inspires the full development of each individual's goals, abilities, and interests" (College Mission) and accepts its role as the intellectual and cultural hub of its district.

The college serves an area where the already low average annual per capita income of approximately \$19,000 leaves no funds available to college-age children who are bright enough to earn a college degree or learn a trade. Many younger applicants are from homes where poverty holds a grip on parents who remain completely unaware of the hopes and dreams of their own children. Young people are often guided to Chipola by high school teachers and counselors who recognize the students' abilities and know of the college's efforts to assist students in receiving financial aid through state or federal sources or awards from the Chipola Foundation's McLendon Educational Trust for "worthy and needy" students.

Many other applicants are older, nontraditional students who have been employed but require skills upgrade training, have become unemployed and seek retraining, or may be displaced and in need of training to enter the workforce for the first time. Many older students

elect to change career paths or desire a college degree later in life when other family obligations are less demanding. Chipola College is committed to using all its resources to help these students—many of whom must travel “upstream” if, indeed, they travel at all beyond their poverty and cultural circumstances.

### **Chipola’s Future**

Chipola entered its 60<sup>th</sup> year with anticipation. With the support of the Chipola College Foundation; a new Student Services Building; a Title III project to increase student persistence through an Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) for on-demand tutoring, Supplemental Instruction (SI), and an expanded orientation course; and guaranteed recurring funding and SUCCEED, Florida! Grants to support the Teacher Education Program, the college is ready to accomplish even more. Emphasis will be placed on Distance Learning opportunities using Desire 2 Learn, grant writing and resource development, enhancement of existing programs, and start-up of new training for business and industry.

With a documented record of success and a bright future, Chipola College continues to accept the challenge of its own mission to provide “accessible, affordable, quality educational opportunities to the citizens of Calhoun, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty and Washington counties and all others who choose to attend.”