

# **US News & World Report Ranks Blackburn College Among Best Colleges in Midwest**

by Blackburn College Press Releases  
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CARLINVILLE, IL - Blackburn College has again been recognized by U.S. News & World Report's rankings of the best colleges and universities in the country. Considered one of the most comprehensive research publications for students and parents considering opportunities in higher education, U.S. News evaluates more than 1,500 institutions based on 17 measures of academic quality, including educational outcomes

and student excellence. In the publication's 2023 Best Colleges guide, U.S. News places Blackburn in the top tier of Midwestern colleges with an overall rank of 35. They also recognized Blackburn as a "Top Performer on Social Mobility" for the fourth consecutive year.

While offering the engaged academics of a traditional college, Blackburn adds an additional dimension to the college experience. One of ten federally-recognized work colleges, the College offers the only program in the nation exclusively managed by students. Blackburn students gain real-life work and leadership skills that immediately apply to nearly any job situation after graduation. This four-year head start to advance their careers is invaluable to students and unique to Blackburn.

"We are proud to be recognized among the very best institutions in the Midwest," President Mark Biermann said. "These rankings capture Blackburn's dedication to providing an exceptional theoretical and hands-on education, grounded in the liberal arts, that can transform lives and help students rise to reach their full potential."

Blackburn's approach has also helped make a college education affordable to thousands of first-generation students and working-class families. U.S. News ranked Blackburn on its list of top performers on social mobility in the Midwest region, which spotlights institutions best serving low-income and underrepresented populations.

"Economically disadvantaged students are less likely than others to finish college, even when controlling for other characteristics," the guide reads. "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." These federal grants are awarded to students whose adjusted gross family incomes fall under \$50,000, with the majority going to households earning less than \$20,000 annually. During the last academic year, more than half of Blackburn students were Pell Grant eligible, and a little over a third were the first in their family to attend college.

"Blackburn has a tremendous ability to advance social mobility," Biermann shared. "This ranking is a testament to our deep commitment to ensuring access to higher education is more inclusive. A college degree is life-changing and, in the process, can lift up individual students, families, and even entire communities. Social mobility is one of the most important areas of focus for colleges and universities."

In addition to the U.S. News Best Colleges guide, Blackburn has received recognition from other collegiate-ranking organizations. Washington Monthly evaluates liberal arts colleges - four-year institutions awarding degrees focusing on arts and sciences - based on their contribution to social mobility, research, and public service. Among more than 250 bachelor's colleges, Blackburn was ranked first in Illinois and 33rd nationally for

performance by students receiving Pell Grants in Washington Monthly's 2022 College Guide and Rankings. Blackburn was also featured on the Most Military-Supportive Colleges and Universities in the Northeastern U.S. list from Military Supportive Colleges. A proud participant of the Yellow Ribbon Program, Blackburn was noted as an “ideal school” for those with previous college and military education. Editors also highlighted the College's personalized academic approach and commitment to student success.

### ***About Blackburn College***

*Founded in 1837, Blackburn College is a four-year, Presbyterian-related, co-educational liberal arts college located in Carlinville, IL. One of only ten federally-recognized Work Colleges, Blackburn has the only program in the nation fully managed by students. Balancing academic rigor and experiential learning, each student at Blackburn gains substantial experience and develops critical skills by contributing to their community, all while building a resume and earning their degree. U.S. News & World Report has recognized Blackburn College as one of the best colleges in the midwest region for 2023. Blackburn has also been named a Top Performer for Social Mobility in their Best Colleges guide for 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. The Washington Monthly ranked Blackburn first in Illinois for performance by students receiving Pell Grants in 2023 and twice previously named Blackburn as the best baccalaureate college in Illinois.*