

# [***FACT CHECK: Was Joe Biden The First Person In His Family To Attend College?; A 1957 obituary of his maternal grandfather stated that he had gone to and graduated from Santa Clara College***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BS6-5GT1-JBFB-H00F-00000-00&context=1516831)

The Daily Caller

April 10, 2024 Wednesday 03:07 PM EST

Copyright 2024 The Daily Caller, Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** ***POLITICS***

**Length:** 409 words

**Byline:** Joseph Casieri, Fact Check Reporter, [*JosephCasieri@dailycaller.com*](mailto:JosephCasieri@dailycaller.com)

**Body**

[*Link to Image*](https://cdn01.dailycaller.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/GettyImages-2115092697-scaled-e1711991673539.jpg)

President Joe Biden recently [*claimed*](https://twitter.com/rncresearch/status/1777415459899379724?s=46&t=_SBps_6l8pJpvMTuSvyAeQ) he was the first member of his family to attend college.

**Verdict: False**

The claim is inaccurate. A 1957 obituary of his maternal grandfather stated that he had gone to and graduated from Santa Clara College.

**Fact Check:**

The House Judiciary and Oversight Committees were denied the ability to obtain the audio record of Biden's interview with special counsel Robert Hur, [*CBS News*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/justice-department-house-gop-biden-special-counsel-interview-audio/) reported. The Justice Department rejected the request to give House members access to the interview after the committee issued a subpoena.

Biden recently claimed during an April 8 speech in Wisconsin that he was the first of his family to go to college. Biden made it while discussing his student loan forgiveness plan.

“I, like an awful lot of people in this audience, was the first in my family to go to college. I watched my dad struggle to help me get there,” Biden said.

This claim is inaccurate. Biden has made this claim in the past and has retracted this statement admitting that it was not true, [*the New York Post*](https://nypost.com/2024/04/09/us-news/biden-repeats-lie-about-being-first-in-his-family-to-go-to-college/) reported. Biden made this same claim when he was running for President in 1987. [*The New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/1987/09/18/us/biden-admits-plagiarism-in-school-but-says-it-was-not-malevolent.html) reported Biden retracted his claim that he was first in his family to attend college. He told the outlet that “there are Finnegans, my mother's family, that went to college.”

A [*1957 obituary*](https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-tribune-1957-maternal-grandfather-am/36302405/) for Ambrose Finnegan, Biden's maternal grandfather, shows that he went to Santa Clara College and graduated from there.

“Finnegan left this area following high school to enroll at Santa Clara College, Calif. A star athlete, he gained nationwide recognition for -his feats while quarterback of the Santa Clara football team. -Following his graduation from college...” the obituary reads.

The Pennsylvania news outlet the [*York Daily Record*](https://www.ydr.com/story/news/history/blogs/yorkspast/2020/04/16/joe-biden-father-connection-york-pa/111556362/) reported on the Biden family history in 2020. The outlet reported that Joe Biden's father Joseph R. Biden Sr. attended Johns Hopkins University for one year.  [***(RELATED: No, The Guardian Did Not Published A Headline Labeling Afternoon Tea As Racist)***](https://checkyourfact.com/2024/03/15/fact-check-the-guardian-headline-afternoon-tea/)

A White House spokesman told the [*New York Post*](https://nypost.com/2024/04/09/us-news/biden-repeats-lie-about-being-first-in-his-family-to-go-to-college/) that the president “is proud to be the first Biden to graduate college.”

The Biden administration claims that the student loan forgiveness plan would benefit 25 million borrowers. [*ABC News*](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/president-biden-announce-student-loan-relief-plans/story?id=108969723) reported that 23 million people will see their entire student debt balance growth eliminated.

Check Your Fact reached out to the White House for comment. We will update this piece if a response is provided.

**Graphic**

WASHINGTON, DC - MARCH 26: U.S. President Joe Biden delivers remarks on the collapse of Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, Maryland, in the Roosevelt Room of the White House on March 26, 2024 in Washington, DC. The bridge collapsed after its support column was hit by a container ship overnight. According to reports, rescuers are still searching for multiple people, while two survivors have been pulled from the Patapsco River. (Photo by Alex Wong/Getty Images)

**Load-Date:** April 10, 2024

**End of Document**