

Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (ARP: American Rescue Plan) Report – Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students

October 22, 2021

On March 11, 2021, the President signed into law the ARP (Pub. L. 117-2). This new law makes available approximately \$39.6 billion for institutions of higher education under the HEERF (Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund) grant program, with funding appropriated through existing programs previously authorized under the CRRSAA (Pub. L. 116-260).

Douglas Education Center, OPEID: 02068300 received funds under ARP (a)(4) grant funding under the Proprietary Institution Grant Funds for Students Program, Assistance Listing Number (ALN) 84.425Q, as authorized under section 2003 of the ARP, and inviting applications from eligible proprietary institutions that did not previously receive funding under section 314(a)(4) of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA) in order for these institutions to make emergency financial aid grants to students.

The institution appreciates that Congress and the President have made these critical funds available for eligible students who have expenses related to the coronavirus pandemic. We take receipt of these federal funds seriously and are distributing them in accordance with guidance.

The institution is making the below information available for transparency purposes and in compliance with the U.S. Department of Education’s (“Department”) Electronic Announcement of May 6, 2020.¹ For questions or concerns regarding this Fund Report, please contact **Amanda Phillips, Executive Director of Operations**, at **aphillips@dec.edu**.

1. The institution signed and returned to the Department the Certification and Agreement [for] Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students. The institution has used, or intends to use 100% of these funds for financial aid grants to students.
2. The total amount of funds that the institution will receive or has received from the Department pursuant to the institution’s Certification and Agreement [for] Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students under ARP is **\$129,485**. HEERF II and III combined = **\$343,419**
3. The total amount of emergency financial aid grants designated for students under ARP and CRRSAA (HEERF II remaining and HEERF III) as of the date of this Fund Report is **\$164,219**.
4. The estimated total number of students at the institution eligible to participate in ARP (a)(4) grant funding under the Proprietary Institution Grant Funds for Students Program, Assistance Listing Number (ALN) 84.425Q, as authorized under section 2003 of the ARP is **205, which includes those that may self-certify**. Based on population census 10/22/2021.

¹ See: <https://ifap.ed.gov/electronic-announcements/050620HigherEdEmergencyReliefFundRptg>

5. The total number of students who have received an emergency financial aid grant under ARP (a)(4) grant funding under the Proprietary Institution Grant Funds for Students Program, Assistance Listing Number (ALN) 84.425Q, as authorized under section 2003 of the ARP is **171**.
6. The methods used by the institution to determine which students receive emergency financial aid grants and how much they would receive under ARP (a)(4) grant funding under the Proprietary Institution Grant Funds for Students Program, Assistance Listing Number (ALN) 84.425Q, as authorized under section 2003 of the ARP are provided at **Attachment A**.
7. Any instructions, directions, or guidance provided by the institution to students concerning the emergency financial aid grants are provided at **Attachment B**.

Attachment A

Awarding Grants

Douglas Education Center's administration has reviewed numerous methods for distributing the Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students under the American Rescue Plan (ARP). Recognizing most students have been impacted by the national disaster, awarding metrics have been determined for all students.

The institution has developed 9 levels of awarding. Awards were determined based on pell eligibility, program length (in months, credits, hours, cost), enrollment status and FAFSA application status. The first is for students with pell-eligible EFCs in degree programs. Pell eligibility refers to pell-eligible EFCs and not pell awarding rules or regulations except that a student may not be eligible for this grant funding if in default on a federal student loan or in grant overpayment. It has been determined that degree programs are twice the length (in months, credits or hours) and are approximately twice the cost of certificate/diploma programs, on average. The second is for students with pell eligible EFCs in certificate or diploma programs and these programs are half the length (in months, credits or hours) and are approximately half the cost, therefore; the award is 50% of the same group in the degree programs, or Level 1. The third is for students with EFCs above pell eligibility in degree programs and these awards are half that of Level 1 because of pell ineligibility. The fourth is for students with EFCs above pell eligibility in certificate or diploma programs and is half the award of the same group for degree program applicants, or Level 2. The fifth is for students in degree programs who did not file a FAFSA and self-certify eligibility and are half that of Level 3. The sixth is for students in certificate or diploma programs who did not file a FAFSA and self-certify eligibility and are approximately half that of Level 4. The seventh is for part-time students in degree programs with pell-eligible EFC's and is half that of level 3. The eighth is for part-time students in degree programs with EFC's above pell eligibility and is approximately half that of level 4. The ninth is for certificate/diploma programs that are less than a semester in length (less than 15 months) and is approximately half that of level 6.

There was no need to create categories for part-time certificate or diploma programs based on the population.

Calculating Grant Amounts

Douglas Education Center's allocation for student grants under the HEERF II (remaining funds) and HEERF III, CRRSAA and ARP, 2021 is \$164,219.

The grant award amount is dependent upon the number of eligible applicants or:

X number of eligible applicants X award level

Level 1 award \$1,500.00

Level 2 award \$750.00

Level 3 award \$750.00

Level 4 award \$375.00

Level 5 award \$375.00

Level 6 award \$200.00

Level 7 award \$375.00

Level 8 award \$200.00

Level 9 award \$100.00

The total award potential for this group is \$158,950.00. This potentially leaves a remaining \$5,269.00 of funds will be awarded as is indicated below. Based on the 171 actual applications, the awards for those who applied are **\$136,250.00**.

If there are any unexpended funds remaining after this award distribution, there will be an additional awarding session in early 2022. This will be based on the same as above and will be first requested, first awarded until the funds are fully expended. This could result in the final applicants award being a partial award depending on the remaining funds. Remaining funds at this time are **\$27,969.00**.

Awards for the remaining \$27,969.00 were expended as follows: A census was conducted for all active students December 13, 2021. On December 20th, 2021, email/text/DEC TV notifications went out to inform students that the second round of funding will begin with applications opening Monday, January 10, 2022 at 10:00 am EST and will be based on first-come, first-served basis. Follow up email and text reminders were sent the week following break beginning January 4, 2022.

Applications were made available on Monday, January 10, 2022 at 10:00 am EST. Applications were not accepted before this time. Applicants were informed that completing an application did not ensure a grant award.

A numbered sign-in sheet was utilized with applicants printing their name and listing the time of sign-in. A corresponding application with the applicant's sign-in number was utilized to ensure awards were handled on a first-come, first-served basis. Logistics were handled by numerous staff members from the Financial Aid Office and the Admissions Office to ensure the integrity of first-come, first-served basis was maintained. Applicants signed-in, were provided with an application to complete and applications were monitored by all three FAO's.

Following what was determined to be a sufficient number of applications to expend the funds, an announcement was made that the application was closed. Additional email/text notifications were sent informing all that a sufficient amount of applications had been received and that awardees would be notified before the end of the day.

Emails were sent to awardees before 2:00 pm EST on Monday, January 10, 2022.

Awarding criteria was same as previous.

Remaining funds at this time: **\$0.00**.

Attachment B

Emergency Financial Aid Grants

On March 11, 2021, the President signed into law the ARP (Pub. L. 117-2). This new law makes available approximately \$39.6 billion for institutions of higher education under the HEERF grant program, with funding appropriated through existing programs previously authorized under the CRRSAA (Pub. L. 116-260). The CARES Act, which establishes and funds the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund directs institutions of higher education to provide emergency financial aid grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus.

Student Eligibility

Eligibility criteria for this grant award includes:

Institutions may award student grants for:

- any component of their cost of attendance. Emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as:
 - tuition
 - food
 - housing
 - health care (including mental)
 - child care
- The applicant was enrolled and is actively engaged in coursework as of October 22, 2021.
- The applicant must have begun classes on or before October 22, 2021
- The applicant has a valid FAFSA on file with DEC and is eligible for Federal Student Aid OR certifies the following criteria to participate in programs under Section 484 of the Higher Education Act, including but not limited to the following:
 - The applicant has a valid social security number

- The applicant is a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen
- The applicant possesses a high school diploma, GED, or completion of high school in an approved homeschool setting
- The applicant is not enrolled in an elementary or secondary school
- The applicant has completed registration with Selective Service (male students)
- The applicant is maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
- The applicant does not owe a refund on a federal grant(s)
- The applicant is not in default on a federal student loan
- The applicant has not been convicted of, or pled nolo contendere or guilty to, a crime involving fraud in obtaining federal student aid funds
- The applicant has not been convicted of any offense under any federal or state law involving the possession or sale of a controlled substance for conduct that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving any grant, loan, or work assistance

Application Process

Douglas Education Center will provide students with an application along with instructions. Applicants must complete and sign the application and conditions. Active students as of the census date listed above will be sent various notifications of the availability of applications during the week of October 25, 2021 – via email, text and posting to DEC TV, instructor notification and various other postings on Campus.

Applicants must attest they will use the Emergency Financial Aid Grant for any component of the student's cost of attendance or for emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health care) or child care.

Applications will be available starting October 29, 2021 at 9:00 am EST. The deadline for submitting an Emergency Financial Aid Grant application is November 3, 2021, 4:00 pm EST. Applications received after this date will not be considered when awarding grants unless it is for a subsequent award.

Applications will be submitted to the Financial Aid Office who will track the applications and review the applications for eligibility and awarding. The Financial Aid Office will complete outreach efforts, in advance of the deadline, to all students that have not already applied.

Awardees may sign over their check to DEC to cover tuition costs if they so choose. There will be no coercion or conditions set upon these awards that require this of any student. Students may be made aware of a balance due the institution for tuition and they may choose to sign over their checks to the institution or otherwise. There shall be no contingencies placed on the awards of these funds.

Awarding Grants

Douglas Education Center's administration has reviewed numerous methods for distributing the Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students. Recognizing most students have been impacted by the national disaster, awarding metrics have been determined for all students.

The institution has developed 9 levels of awarding. The first is for students with pell eligible EFCs in degree programs, the second for students with pell eligible EFCs in certificate or diploma programs, the third is for students with EFCs above pell eligibility in degree programs, the fourth is for students with EFCs above pell eligibility in certificate or diploma programs, the fifth is for students in degree programs who did not file a FAFSA and self-certify eligibility and the sixth is for students in certificate or diploma programs who did not file a FAFSA and self-certify eligibility. The seventh is for part-time students in degree programs with pell-eligible EFC's. The eighth is for part-time students in degree programs with EFC's above pell eligibility and the ninth is for certificate/diploma programs that are less than a semester in length (less than 15 months).

After determining the number of eligible applicants, the Financial Aid Office will award grants to all eligible students indicating they incurred expenses and need financial assistance in meeting allowable expenses.

Calculating Grant Amounts

Douglas Education Center's allocation for student grants under HEERF II and III is \$343,419.

The minimum Emergency Financial Aid Grant for HEERF III is \$100.00. The maximum grant is dependent upon the number of eligible applicants, but will not exceed \$1,500.00.

Disbursing Grant Funds

The grant will be distributed to eligible applicants as soon as possible following the deadline and will be based on the awarding levels listed above. Each applicant will be reviewed for their level of award and the award information will be provided by the Financial Aid Office to the Business Office for issuance of checks.

Grant funds will be distributed in one disbursement via check. The check will be available to be picked up in the business office at Douglas Education Center. Students will be notified that checks are available via email and text. The institution will maintain a separate bank account to issue checks for this purpose and to track checks to ensure they are negotiated.

Additional monies or remaining funds from non-negotiated checks will be calculated and reviewed. Any subsequent or additional disbursements will be decided on at a later date, but no later than 3/1/2022.

Rev.

11/4/2021 – application process closed for this period. Checks have not yet been negotiated.

Rev.

1/5/2022 – Round I checks negotiated. Remaining funds of \$27,969.00 available for Round II awarding.

Rev.

1/10/2022 – Round II application process closed. Checks have not yet been negotiated. Funds will be fully expended, pending negotiation of checks.