

Report on Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Report #1 - May 12, 2020

Whittier College PR/Award Number: P425E202004

In compliance with Section 18004(e) of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act signed by the President of the United States on March 27, 2020, Whittier College submits this report regarding funds received through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students. The HEERF provides funding to institutions of higher education “to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.”

Acknowledgment of Funding and Certification

Whittier College acknowledges that it signed the Certification and Agreement for these funds and returned it to the U. S. Department of Education on April 13, 2020. Whittier College received its Grant Award Notification on April 24, 2020. As stipulated in the Certification, the College assures that no less than 50 percent of the funds received under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act will be used to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Whittier College students.

Total Grant Award

Pursuant to the Certification and Agreement, Whittier College will receive a total of \$1,879,550 under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act, of which at least \$939,775 will be provided directly to students in the form of Emergency Financial Aid Grants for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations resulting from the coronavirus.

Funds Distributed to Date

As of May 12, 2020, Whittier College has distributed **\$0** in Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students. The first round of applications will open on May 13, 2020.

Student Eligibility

The total number of Whittier College students eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and, therefore, eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act is **1,418**.

Number of Student Recipients

As of May 12, 2020, no students have yet received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act. The first round of applications will open on May 13, 2020.

Methods Used to Determine which Students Receive Emergency Aid and How Much

Whittier College opted to create a secure online application process for eligible students to request an Emergency Financial Aid Grant. Students are asked to indicate how they have been financially impacted by the coronavirus and the amount of relief being sought in the eligible expense categories stipulated in the Certification and Agreement. Supporting documentation is requested where available. In order to prioritize students with the greatest financial need as

recommended by the Secretary of Education, the first round of applications (beginning May 13, 2020) is restricted to Whittier College Pell Grant recipients. Subsequent rounds (beginning May 27, 2020) will be open to all eligible students. The availability of funds will determine the timeline for subsequent rounds of funding. Applicants are asked to report their actual need, but initial grants will be capped at \$575 to ensure meaningful grants can be distributed as widely as possible to all eligible students. Additional funds may be awarded if a student's circumstances change or if funds remain available after the first two application rounds are complete. A student-centered Review Committee will evaluate the applications and recommend funding levels. The Project Director will approve actual grant amounts.

Outreach and Instructions to Students

In order to streamline communications with students and their families and provide timely updates after the disruption of campus operations resulting from the coronavirus, Whittier College initiated an email newsletter distributed twice weekly. The College also created a COVID-19 Response webpage where information regarding the CARES Act Emergency Financial Aid Grants was subsequently added.

The May 12, 2020 newsletter announced the application process for the Emergency Financial Aid Grants with a link to the College's [CARES Act webpage](#). The webpage includes information regarding the purpose of funding, eligibility criteria, allowable use of funds, application deadlines, a link to the online application, anticipated questions and answers (FAQs), contact information for questions, acknowledgment of federal funds awarded, and assurance that funds will be properly disbursed in accordance with Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act.

In addition, students enrolled in Spring 2020 who received Pell grants for the 2019-2020 academic year will receive a direct email on May 13, 2020 informing them of their eligibility for the Emergency Financial Aid Grants with instructions to apply. Likewise, an email will be sent to all eligible students enrolled in Spring 2020 in advance of the second round of applications. Reminders will be included in the twice weekly newsletter as well.