

2019-2020 CARES ACT HIGHER EDUCATION EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND (APRIL 21ST, 2020 TO SEPTEMBER 30TH, 2020)

On April 9th, 2020, the US Department of Education released information to the higher education community that schools would be able to receive an allocation of funds from the CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) with instructions, policies and requirements to remain compliant, along with a Certification and Agreement assuring that Gnomon will use no less than 50% of the funds received to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.

On April 10th, Gnomon submitted their signed Certification and Agreement to the Department and half of our \$226,588 allocation was made available to us in our Federal account on April 23rd, then transferred to an account we opened specifically for these funds on April 27th.

To the \$113,294, Gnomon's Financial Aid Office (FAO) added the unawarded FSEOG funds (\$730, previously awarded to students who did not enroll for the Spring quarter) and unearned FWS funds (\$6,728.57; all work-study jobs were halted upon campus closure as of Noon on March 19th) for a new total of \$120,752.57 to provide to students exclusively.

On April 21st, the US Department of Education released information to the higher education community that limited the grant recipients to only students who certified that they 'had incurred additional expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus,' and have filed or would be eligible to file a FAFSA.

The FAO learned from the Registrar's Office that the number of program students enrolled for Spring was 203; 38 of this population is classified as international student, none of whom would be eligible under the new guidance. Another 12 of the remaining students were removed from the eligibility list based on citizenship, Selective Service and DACA issues which made them ineligible for consideration. On April 23rd, an email was sent to these students with a PDF of the HEERF FAQ to Students (with a reference to #9 regarding eligibility) and the 2019-20 FAFSA attached, letting them know the reason why they would not be eligible.

The FAO reviewed the list of 153 students and selected those who had already completed a FAFSA for 2019-20 to be the first priority group to receive grant monies. These students were sent an email on April 27th with a certification form giving them the option to forfeit the grant or accept the grant by certifying that they had incurred additional expenses. They were also asked to list anything specific that changed their per-usual expenditures, incurred fees, or other. The deadline to submit the form to the FAO was May 1st.

Those who were determined to be eligible but had not completed a FAFSA were sent an email on April 25th with instructions and were given until May 1st to do so.

In addition to the emails, Gnomon posted notices on social media and Discord on April 23rd, 27th and 29th directing students to check their "gnomon.edu" student email Inbox for communication and directions. Gnomon also sent the same information to Student Council, in a formal letter as well as a reminder email April 27th and April 29, respectively.

Based on the total amount Gnomon could provide to students, the estimate was that if each student responded, each would receive an equal portion:

$\$120,752.57 \text{ divided by } 153 = \789.23

Due to the low number of responses from students, another round of emails was sent to eligible, or possibly

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eligible, students, a notice was sent to the Student Council and another round of postings on social media and Discord on April 29th. Gnomon's Human Resources and Student Affairs offices were also asked to support the communication to ensure all students were privy to the grant monies, information, discussion, and CARES Act, generally and specifically.

On the deadline of May 1st, roughly half of the cohort had confirmed or forfeited. The grants earmarked for those who forfeited were redistributed, so that each respondent could receive \$810.42. The FAO notified those who had returned the certification form and had a completed FAFSA on file that they were being awarded \$800 and that they would be receiving the funds by May 6th either by mailed check or direct deposit.

\$800 each for 76 students = \$60,800

While the grants were credited directly to the student accounts (on May 4th and 5th), the funds were not used to cover any school charges, tuition or other, on the account; and once the payment was delivered to the students' personal account (that each student confirmed), the effect was money in, money out. Using a designated aid code in Gnomon's accounting system will also make it easy to track the grant for their 2020 1098-T.

The 73 students who had not responded were sent another email on May 1st with an extended deadline to submit by May 8th, and within that week another 23 sent in their confirmations.

By the May 8th deadline, none of the other 50 students had responded. The FAO notified the last group of 23 that they were being awarded \$800. The grants were credited to their student account on May 8th and paid to the students on May 13th.

\$800 each for 23 students = \$18,400

The remaining \$41, 552.57 in unclaimed funds were redistributed to the total 99 students. The grants credited to their accounts on May 8th and 9th. They were emailed a notification for the additional grant funds on May 9th and 11th which included the link below with information regarding the treatment of these grants for their 2020 IRS taxes. The students were paid on May 13th.

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/faqs-higher-education-emergency-relief-fund-and-emergency-financial-aid-grants-under-the-cares-act>

\$419.72 each for 70 students = \$29,380.40

\$419.73 each for 29 students = \$12,172.17

Out of a possible 149 students, 50 did not respond and 99 were awarded.

\$1,219.72 for 70 students = \$85,380.40

\$1,219.73 for 29 students = \$35,372.17

TOTAL: \$120,752.57