

**CARES Act
Higher Education Emergency Fund I
Quarterly and FINAL Report
March 31, 2021**

Section 18004(e) of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act” or the “Act”) directs institutions receiving funds under the Act to submit (in a time and manner required by the U. S. Secretary of Education) a report describing the use of funds distributed from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund. In accordance with Department of Education guidance, Berry College’s initial report to the Secretary of Education was published on the college’s website on May 22, 2020. Follow-up updates were published on July 6, August 20, October 4, 2020, and January 8, 2021.

This report is being provided to meet the quarterly and final federal reporting requirement.

The CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) provides direct emergency assistance to students to cover expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus (including eligible expenses under a student’s cost of attendance, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care). Professional judgement was used to reason that all students would incur additional expenses related to cost of attendance and remote online instruction exceeding amounts of grants.

To achieve the request from the Secretary of Education in her letter dated April 9, 2020, the Berry College strategy to distribute HEERF emphasized the financial need of families and the desire to balance grants to the neediest students while also distributing the funds as broadly as possible.

1. Berry College signed and returned to the Department of Education the Certification and Agreement on April 22, 2020. Through this agreement, Berry College confirmed to the Department of Education that we intend to use no less than 50% of the funds received under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act to provide emergency financial aid grants to students.
2. Berry College received a disbursement of \$794,906 from the Department of Education corresponding to the 50% of the funds received under Section 18004(a) (1) of the CARES Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.
3. As of this report, \$794,906 (the full HEERF I allocation) has been distributed directly to undergraduate students in the form of emergency financial aid grants.
4. The college carefully reviewed all enrolled undergraduate students and only considered those eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in the Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 for an emergency financial aid grant under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act. During the time of this emergency, approximately 2,000 enrolled undergraduate students met the Section 484 criteria and 1,099 have been awarded an emergency financial aid grant.
5. To ensure emergency grants went to the students with greatest need and distribute the funds to as many students as possible, the college determined that students with an EFC on the 2019 – 2020 or 2020-21 FAFSA greater than \$25,000 were not eligible to receive a grant. The college distributed the funds weighted by student need as determined by the following factors: estimated family income from

the 2019 – 2020 FAFSA, student work income, level of student debt, and the estimated family income from the 2020-21 FAFSA for Pell eligible students. Using this distribution strategy, the average grant distributed to eligible students was \$723.29 with a range of \$75 to \$2,845.

Undergraduate Recipients:	1,099	CARES Act - HEERF I Funding
Full Time Pell Grant Recipients	568	473,465.43
Part Time Pell Grant Recipients	1	700.00
Total Pell Grant Recipients	569	474,165.43
Full Time Non-Pell Grant Recipients	527	318,740.57
Part Time Non-Pell Grant Recipients	3	2,000.00
Total Non-Pell Grant Recipients	530	320,740.57
Total Distributed		794,906.00

6. The following message concerning the remaining CARES Act funding being distributed to additional recipients was sent to all students on March 26, 2021.



Dear Parents/Students,

Three separate bills have now been approved by the federal government providing funds to distribute as emergency grants to students affected by the COVID disruption. These programs include *The CARES Act*, passed in late March 2020, the *Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act, 2021* (CRRSAA) approved in January 2021, and the *American Rescue Plan Act of 2021*, recently approved in March 2021.

The purpose of this message is to update you on Berry’s distribution of these grants. More detailed information about each federal program is listed below. For grants received so far, the Department of Education asked each institution to establish a distribution process that prioritized students with the greatest financial need, including those who are eligible for Pell grants. To achieve this, Berry College has chosen to provide grants to students who have an estimated family contribution (EFC) on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) between \$0 and \$24,999 and who are eligible to participate in federal financial aid programs (as defined by Section 484 in the Higher Education Act of 1965).

CARES Act Funding

In May 2020, Berry distributed \$688,600 among 919 undergraduate students. A small portion of this grant was held for additional student aid requests. This week we will distribute the remaining \$88,710.42 in CARES Act funds among 153 students. This remaining funding will go to currently enrolled students with the greatest need (those with Pell Grant eligibility) who joined the college in Fall 2020. Checks will be mailed directly to the students at their campus addresses within the next ten days. The average grant is approximately \$579 with a range between \$350 and \$648. **While Federal guidelines dictate that funds must be distributed directly to the students, we encourage parents and students to discuss how best to use these funds.** Funds received through this grant are not considered taxable income.

Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act

Berry is preparing to distribute \$794,906 in emergency assistance from this program. Approximately 959 students, (half of the students enrolled during the spring 2021 semester) qualify to receive assistance using the criteria stated above. The average grant is approximately \$829 with a range between \$200 and \$1,475. Checks will be mailed to students at their campus address beginning April 5. **While the Federal guidelines dictate that funds must be distributed directly to the students, we encourage parents and students to discuss how best to use these funds.** Funds received through this grant are not considered taxable income.

American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 includes additional funding to provide emergency assistance to students. Once the guidelines have been established, we will update parents and students on the allocation of these funds.

We understand that many of our families have been impacted and are still facing challenges due to the ongoing pandemic. **To assist you, we invite all families experiencing hardship, including those caused by COVID-19, to complete the short online [Request for Supplemental Aid form](#).**

If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Financial Aid by calling 706.236.1714 or via email at financialaid@berry.edu.

Thank you,
Financial Aid Office
Berry College