



The Omega Studios' School of Applied Recording Arts and Sciences

Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)

HEERF 2 July 9, 2021 Report

Update on HEERF 2 grant processing and disbursement:

As of 7/9/21, all HEERF2 monies had been disbursed and checks were mailed. The total amount disbursed was \$53,545.00.

Ninety seven (97) out of one hundred forty eight (148) candidates requested participation in the HEERF 2 grant program.

As published in the June 2021 HEERF2 report, schools were challenged with developing a formula for determining a student's HEERF 2 grant allocation keeping in mind a number of stipulations and applicable laws, including non-discrimination. HEERF 2 funds are to assist students with their cost of attendance or for emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as tuition, food, housing, etc. Schools were asked to prioritize students with exceptional need, such as students who received Pell grants. However, enrolling in a Title IV eligible program or receiving Title IV was not a criteria to participate in HEERF2. This made it very difficult for Omega to determine which students had *exceptional* need.

To try and identify students incurring cost of attendance related expenses or emergency cost due to COVID, Omega decided to rely on student self-certification. Students were required to submit a Request to Participate in HEERF2 form. The form defined qualifying expenses and provided space for the student to declare which, if any, qualifying expenses they incurred between 3/12/20 and 6/30/21. A positive response was interpreted as establishing need. The only other criteria was citizenship. Again, the school depended upon the student's acknowledgement of their citizenship status.

Determining Individual Awards

Omega realized that students were in school between 3/12/20 and 6/30/21 for varying lengths of time. Some had withdrawn, graduated, or were currently attending. Of those that were currently attending, some were at less than half time status after their entire program had been offered. In the hope of being fair to all, Omega considered the following:

1. Students who withdrew or graduated no longer incurred cost of attendance expenses.
2. Cost of attendance formulas calculate expenses based on the length of the program. Students who attend at less than half time are not eligible for federal aid and therefore, the cost of attendance is no longer a factor.

3. Students on a leave of absence temporarily halt instruction and, therefore, are not scheduled for instruction.

With these in mind, the school created a formula that identified the number of weeks each student was scheduled for instruction between 3/12/20 and 6/30/21. In the cases of withdrawal or graduation, the number of scheduled weeks of instruction ended with the student's last day of attendance. For all other students, the weeks of scheduled instruction ended on the day the school provided the last hour of instruction for the program in which the student enrolled (ex: 900 hrs, 672 hrs, etc.).

In the attempt to address the department's concern of prioritizing students with Pell Grants, the school determined how many of the 97 students participating in the HEERF 2 program received Pell grants and set aside \$100 from the total grant for each recipient. The remaining grant funds were divided by the aggregate number of weeks the 97 students were scheduled for instruction. The resulting number became the amount a student would receive for each week they were scheduled for instruction. (Example: student 1 was scheduled for 12 weeks of instruction; student two was scheduled for 5; and, student 3 was scheduled for 20. The aggregate number of weeks of instruction for the 3 students is $12+5+20=37$. If the total funds were \$500, student 1 would receive $(\$500/37) \times 12$). A 'week' of instruction is credited when at least one day of instruction is scheduled within the 7 day week

Calculation Summary:

1. Aggregate total weeks of scheduled instruction for all participants = 4,304.43
2. Number of Pell recipients = 36
3. Initial funding allocation = \$53,545.00
4. HEERF2 funds for general population: $\$53,545 - \3600 (Pell recipients) = \$49,945.00
5. Weekly allocation: $\$49,945.00/4,304.43 = \11.60

Questions pertaining to the HEERF2 program should be directed to Denise Konecny, Director of Financial Aid phone 301-230-9100 or financialaid@omegastudios.com