

HEERF III Funding Report

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021

On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Act of 2021, which provides additional relief to address the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, was enacted and signed into law. The ARPA appropriated approximately \$39.6 billion for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) and represents the third stream of funding appropriated for HEERF to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. Piedmont is reviewing ARPA guidance recently released by the Department of Education and will provide updates to this website as they become available.

ARPA/HEERF III Funding Section 314(a)(1) | Student Portion

December 31, 2021

1. An acknowledgement that the institution signed and returned to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) the Certification and Agreement and the assurance that the institution has used the applicable amount of funds designated under the ARP (a)(1) and (a)(4) programs to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students.

Institutions who received HEERF I grant funds under the CARES Act were not required to apply for the HEERF II or HEERF III grants. Piedmont University received its HEERF III Grant Award Notification on May 20, 2021. In keeping with the terms of acceptance of these funds, Piedmont University will use no less than **\$2,524,878**, in accordance with section 2003(7) of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants directly 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 the ARPA (a)(1) and (a)(4) programs.

Piedmont University received **\$2,524,878** in HEERF III aid from the Department of Education.

3. The total amount of Emergency Financial Aid Grants distributed to students under the ARPA (a)(1) and (a)(4) programs as of the date of submission (i.e., as of the initial report and every calendar quarter thereafter).

On July 28, 2021, Piedmont University awarded HEERF III funds to students that were registered for fall semester 2021 as of that date. Additional awards and adjustments were made in September for those students that registered after July 28th, filed a 2021-2022 FAFSA, and/or had changes to their Expected Family Contribution on their FAFSA. Total amount awarded in HEERF III funds for fall semester was **\$1,394,200 to 2,190** students.

As of December 31, 2021, a total of **2186** students received a HEERF III grant disbursement totaling **\$1,392,200**. Four students declined the HEERF III grant award.

4. The estimated total number of students at the institution that are eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students under the ARPA (a)(1) and (a)(4) programs.

As of December 31, 2021, the total number of students eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants for fall semester 2021 was estimated to be **2,190** students.

5. The total number of students who have received an Emergency Financial Aid Grant to students under the ARPA (a)(1) and (a)(4) programs.

As of December 31, 2021, the total number of students who have received/awarded ARP/HEERF III Emergency Financial Aid grants for fall semester 2021 were **2,186** students.

6. The method(s) used by the institution to determine which students receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants and how much they would receive under the ARP (a)(1) and (a)(4) programs.

Eligibility criteria for automatic funding for HEERF III: Phase I (Fall 2021 Semester) at Piedmont University:

- Registered fall semester 2021 at Piedmont University

The Federal HEERF III Emergency Grant requires the University to prioritize a greater portion of funding to undergraduate students that exhibit exceptional need. "Exceptional need" is defined as demonstrating via the FAFSA an expected family contribution (EFC) number within the Pell eligible range. For HEERF III awards, an EFC of less than 5,847 demonstrates exceptional need. Students who have not completed a FAFSA qualified for an award, however they did not receive the "exceptional need" level of award. Students were prioritized for these funds based on a valid 2021-2022 FAFSA and need calculation from

the Department of Education. HEERF III Grants ranged from \$300 to \$1,050 depending on EFC.

Reconciliation of HEERF III Emergency Grants awarded fall semester 2021 was conducted on September 2, September 30 and November 9, 2021 to identify and award students registered after the initial list was collected and to adjust grants upward due to decreases in EFC or receipt of FAFSA. Students in verification at time of initial distribution were awarded the grant at the lowest tier level: \$400 undergraduate and \$300 graduate. Adjustments to the grant were made accordingly based on verification results.

HEERF III Emergency Grants were processed through the Student Accounts Office and were directly refunded to eligible students unless authorization was given by the student. Any outstanding balance was the financial responsibility of the student.

Students were requested to complete an authorization form found at: [HEERF III Authorization Form](#). With this acknowledgement, students confirmed HEERF III Grant funds:

- Do not have to be repaid.
- Will not be automatically applied to student account balances unless authorized by student.
- May be reported as income on their 2021 1098-T IRS Form.
- Disbursement will be deposited to their bank account via direct deposit authorization.

Eligible students were recommended to setup a direct deposit profile to obtain funding as quickly as possible.

7. Any instructions, directions, or guidance provided by the institution to students concerning the Emergency Financial Aid Grants.

All pertinent information available to students regarding HEERF III/ARP Emergency Financial Aid Grants is posted at the following link: <https://www.piedmont.edu/piedmont-together/cares-act/>. Further guidance will be posted at the link once Piedmont University administration has determined the methodology to distribute Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students for spring semester 2021.

**Piedmont University will continue to monitor Department guidance and update reporting and distribution of funds accordingly.*