CARES Act Financial Aid Grants

Final Report

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, Bay Path University, like other institutions of higher education, received federal funding under Section 18004(a)(1) of the federal CARES Act. This legislation requires Bay Path to use 50% of the funds, or $715,583, to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants directly to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to COVID-19. These expenses may include food, housing, course materials, technology, health care and childcare.

On April 30, 2020, Bay Path signed and returned to the United States Department of Education (ED) our "Certification and Agreement" form. This form included the University's assurance that we intended to provide $715,583 in grants directly to students. The U.S. Department of Education allocation was made available to Bay Path on May 8, 2020.

Under the U.S. Department of Education rules for the program, these funds can be awarded to Bay Path undergraduate or graduate students who are pursuing degrees and matriculated at Bay Path. Guidance from ED requires that students must be eligible to participate in programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to be eligible for these grants. We identified 875 students that are eligible, based on their filing of a 2019/20 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

International students, undocumented students, and non-matriculated students are not eligible to receive CARES Act distributions. Students enrolled exclusively in online programs prior to the pandemic are also ineligible. To ensure students with the greatest financial need receive support, the University has also

decided that employees attending Bay Path as part of the tuition-waiver benefit will not qualify for a CARES Act grant, but dependents of employees are considered eligible if they have met all the criteria. The remaining students who have a current FAFSA on file with the University qualify to receive this funding. To date, we have made grants available to 875 students.

Guidance from the federal government also encouraged colleges and universities to give special consideration to Pell eligible students. As a result, Bay Path has developed a distribution matrix that takes a student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC) into account, which is determined based on information from each student's FAFSA. Whether a student was carrying a full-time or part-time academic load for the Spring 2020 semester and on-campus residency were other factors taken into consideration.

All students who were attending classes at Bay Path this spring have incurred costs due to the disruption of campus operations. What those costs might be depends on each student's personal circumstances. Some students have incurred additional food and housing costs, while those who relied on campus technology or supplies have incurred costs to purchase equipment and/or internet access. Students who lived on campus incurred the additional costs of making an extra trip to campus to collect their belongings.

We also recognize that a great number of our students faced financial hardship prior to the pandemic. This is evidenced by the fact that 658 of our students have an EFC of under $10,000—about a third of our estimated cost of attendance. Therefore, while we have made awards to all students that qualify based on the above criteria, we have chosen to award those who have the greatest need, as demonstrated by their EFC, a larger grant. The grants range from $200 - $1,400.

As of May 29, 2020, all eligible students were issued an Emergency Financial Aid CARES Act check via the U.S. Postal Service based upon the aforementioned criteria.
Questions regarding these awards should be directed to Student Financial Services at 413-565-1256 or via email at SFS@baypath.edu."