

Provost Oparah sent the following message to all USF undergraduate and graduate students earlier today.

Dear USF Students,

As I begin my third month as USF's provost, I continue to be grateful to every one of our students for your warm welcome, for the ways in which you are supporting one another and our community, and for your determination to achieve your very best. I am inspired by your deep commitment to building an inclusive, caring community and by our shared Jesuit mission, palpable in our classrooms, in our Zoom rooms, and beyond.

While I am thrilled to see the campus once again brimming with positive energy, I am aware that many of you continue to deal with hardship and loss associated with the pandemic. The pandemic has impacted all of our lives, but for some, including many of our USF students, those challenges have been more acute. Today, I am pleased to share with you details on grants that will be distributed to eligible USF students through the American Rescue Plan (ARP), a program of the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF).

We are in the process of distributing a third round of this federal emergency funding. More than 4,000 USF undergraduate and graduate students (or about one-third of our student body) will receive grants ranging from \$500 to \$1,500. **Students who are eligible were notified beginning Friday, Sept. 17.**

Student eligibility is based on exceptional financial need. The specific amount students will receive depends on their level of need as determined by their 2021–2022 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), California Dream Act application, or College Scholarship Service (CSS) profile. More information on how USF calculates disbursement is [available on myUSF](#).

Grants under the HEERF program can be used to pay for any component of the cost of attending USF, such as tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health care), or child care. It can also be used for emergency costs that arise due to COVID-19. In the two previous rounds of funding, **more than 3,300 USF students were offered these grants.**

In addition to the emergency funds going directly to many USF students with financial need, the HEERF program provides federal stimulus money to help USF offset revenue losses due to the pandemic. Overall, in the first two rounds of federal funding, USF received approximately \$14.1 million, with \$7.2 million going directly to students.

In addition to the federal stimulus funding, we have established a philanthropic fund — the COVID-19 Response Fund — with contributions from members of the USF Board of Trustees and more than 400 other donors. As the fall semester proceeds, you will receive information from Student Financial Services (SFS) about how to access this fund. Students who previously received this funding include USF's DACA-identified and undocumented students who are not eligible for federal grants due to U.S. Department of Education guidelines.

For questions about ARP grant funds or the COVID-19 Response Fund, please contact Assistant Vice Provost for Student Financial Services [Angelika Williams](#).

There is no better time to be a part of a diverse, social justice-loving, and caring community than now, as we grapple with the ongoing climate and global public health crises, and watch so many lives being uprooted in Afghanistan. The world needs USF's innovators, leaders, and courageous changemakers now more than ever. I hope that you feel inspired by your faculty, uplifted by your peers, and ready to make this an amazing semester!

Warmly,



Provost Chinyere

Chinyere Oparah
Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

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