**COVID-19 CARES Plan for Arapahoe Community College**

Initial Disbursement of $1,039,805

**Overview:**

Through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Sec. 18004. (Higher Education), it is anticipated that Arapahoe Community College (ACC) will receive an initial disbursement of $1,039,805, required to be used only as direct grants to students to provide emergency relief aid for hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic as they look to continue their education.

* These funds represent the initial 50% of the total allocation ACC will receive ($2,079,610). This first disbursement must be used directly to grant ACC students emergency aid to assist with academic and basic needs costs (e.g. tuition/fees, course materials, food, technology, health care, childcare, housing) related to COVID-19 circumstances.
* The second wave of funds, to be received at a later date, will be for expense incurred by the college directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Act defines that funds to each institution of higher education will be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. This includes retaining of current employees to the ‘maximum extent practicable.’

**Student Emergency Aid Distribution Process**

In line with the CARES Act ACC proposes to distribute these initial funds to students who are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As per the CARES Act definitions, qualifying students are those students who self-identify as having need due to COVID-19 circumstances which directly impact students’ academic disruption and/or ability to continue their education. The CARES Act student funding will be prioritized for students who are or were enrolled for Spring 2020, Summer 2020, or Fall 2020 semesters. All disbursement will be tracked by the Financial Aid office and will be reported, per guidance in the CARES Act, after 30 days and every 45 days after. These funds must be disbursed within one year of the college signing for the funds and must be disbursed to qualifying students through a non-discriminatory process.

**ACC CARES Plan Initiatives**

The ACC CARES Plan consists of three initiatives;

1. **Student Emergency Relief (25% of funds).**

* **Emergency Funds.** Recognizing that the COVID-19 situation has drastically impacted many students, funding will be awarded to any ACC student, regardless of previous established financial need or prior eligibility, through a simple application and review process that is executed through the Dean of Students Office. It will utilize the established ACC Emergency Funds process which will be modified to account for needs due to COVID-19
  + The Dean of Students Office will refer student request amount and purpose for funds to the Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid Office will apply the funds to the student’s account to be disbursed directly to the student through the Bank Mobile Vibe preferences chosen.
* **Professional Judgement.** Students who contact the Financial Aid Office for professional judgement consideration of financial aid eligibility will be asked about their expenses related to COVID-19 issues stemming from change in college instruction to fully remote mode and closure of campus facilities. Consideration of matters such as technology expenses or lack of access to free resources on campus (i.e. food pantry) will be reviewed and related funds awarded. As with the emergency fund process, the Financial Aid Office will apply the funds to a student’s account to be disbursed directly to the student through the Bank Mobile Vibe preferences chosen.

1. **Student Continuation of Education Grants (30% of funds).**

* Grants available to students who dropped at least one course during the Spring 2020 semester, due to COVID-19 circumstances, to provide aid (up to $500) to continue their education in either the Summer or Fall 2020 semester. COVID-19 related issues may include employment, health, technology, and/or childcare. Financial Aid Office will disburse these grants directly to students. These funds will not apply to any student balances, but instead will be paid directly to students for use on expenses as determined by the student.

1. **Student Completion Grants (45% of funds).**

* Academic grants available to students who are within 30 credits or less of degree completion who indicate they are now without funds to continue their education due to COVID-19 related issues and seek to complete course work for their degrees. This includes students who report that they are unable to enroll due to lack of funds because of loss of employment, housing, food, health issues or now needing technology, books, childcare or other resources to continue to be enrolled. Financial Aid Office will disburse these grants directly to students. These funds will not apply to any student balances, but instead will be paid directly to students for use on expenses as determined by the student.