

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy, Secretary Bridges Announce Awardees of Nearly \$30 Million to Address COVID-19 Impacts on Postsecondary Students

07/12/2021

TRENTON – Today, Governor Phil Murphy and Secretary of Higher Education Dr. Brian Bridges announced the awardees of nearly \$30 million in federal funding that will be distributed to New Jersey institutions of higher education to support the core priorities of the State Plan for Higher Education (<https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/documents/pdf/StateEducationplan.pdf>) and address the impacts of COVID-19 on postsecondary students.

About \$28.5 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Education, through the second round of Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funding, will be awarded to 35 public and public-mission private institutions that receive state operating aid. These institutions will implement vetted best practices (<https://nj.gov/highereducation/workinggroups.shtml>) that increase college completion, address barriers to student success, and develop sustainable systemic reforms. In addition, more than \$1 million will be awarded to 11 public institutions to combat food insecurity among students.

"Our institutions of higher education have provided a high-quality of education to our students throughout the pandemic, despite challenging circumstances," **said Governor Murphy**. "Supporting our institutions will continue to be a priority as they work to provide an equitable educational experience for students, prepare them for the jobs of the future and meet challenges ahead."

"Through this critical federal funding, New Jersey is prioritizing students' needs and ensuring our workforce will be ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow's post-pandemic economy," **said Secretary Bridges**. "We appreciate that institutions are committing to this challenge and look forward to learning from the innovative best practices implemented, as we strive to meet the state's goal of 65 percent of residents earning a high-quality credential by 2025."

"Providing the resources so every college student has equitable opportunities is how we ensure everyone finds their path to success through higher education," **said Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin**. "Most critically, this involves meeting the food need of a third of New Jersey's college students who have felt the impact of hunger and have struggled to gain access to a healthy and nutritious meal. Together these awards will help our higher education institutions make tremendous strides toward the commitment to lower barriers to access for some of our most vulnerable students, ensuring their potential is not measured against the financial, social, emotional, or educational challenges they may face."

"In the wake of the pandemic it is crucial that our hardest hit communities are not left behind," **said Sandra Senator Cunningham, chair of the Senate Higher Education Committee**. "This funding will go a long way towards uplifting those most impacted by providing opportunities to historically underrepresented communities, and ensuring all our students are receiving the support they need to succeed once they are enrolled."

"Worrying about where your next meal will come from should not be part of the daily challenges that academics and extra-curricular activities present to students," **said Assemblywoman Mila Jasey**. "This funding will ease the worries of students and their families, and work towards mitigating food insecurity on college campuses."

Opportunity Meets Innovation Challenge Grants (<https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/documents/pdf/omic.pdf>)
(\$28.5 Million)

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A total of 35 institutions will be receiving \$28.5 million in funding to support the launch of the "Opportunity Meets

Innovation Challenge,” a competitive grant program to implement best practices (<https://nj.gov/highereducation/workinggroups.shtml>) and develop sustainable system-wide reforms as the state builds long-term resiliency. In implementing these strategies, institutions will be focusing on students who are historically disadvantaged, including underrepresented minorities, low-income students, and working-age adults. Many of these populations were among the hardest hit by the pandemic, which resulted in declines in enrollments, challenges to student success, and unprecedented unemployment figures. Funding will help boost college completion and ensure a robust pipeline of talent is matched to workforce demands.

Institutions chose from a series of interventions reflecting the five core priority areas of the State Plan: expanding opportunities for students to gain early college exposure; improving college affordability; fostering student success; promoting safe and inclusive learning environments; and cultivating research, innovation, and talent.

Through this funding, institutions will be embarking on projects including expanding dual enrollment programs to increase access and eliminate affordability barriers for low-income students; expanding wraparound supports to help encourage student retention by addressing barriers such as food insecurity or lack of childcare; and implementing free-of-cost bridge programs serving first-generation and Pell-eligible students as they transition from high school to college and/or from virtual to in-person learning. Other initiatives include expanding student mental health services and building peer mentor programs; and increasing student success in gateway courses, particularly math, to help reduce students’ cost and ensure success in Science, Technology, Education, and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

A breakdown of the \$28.5 million in OMIC grant award allocations by institution is as follows:

| Institution | Allocation |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Montclair State University | \$1,310,500.00 |
| New Jersey Institute of Technology | \$1,401,884.96 |
| Rowan University | \$1,499,993.00 |
| Rutgers, Camden | \$875,520.00 |
| Rutgers, New Brunswick | \$638,102.02 |
| Rutgers, Newark | \$1,500,000.00 |
| Kean University | \$832,566.00 |
| New Jersey City University | \$498,344.00 |
| Ramapo College of NJ | \$283,000.00 |
| Stockton University | \$662,280.00 |
| The College of New Jersey | \$1,000,000.00 |
| Thomas Edison State University | \$483,496.00 |
| William Paterson University | \$1,488,000.00 |
| Atlantic Cape Community College | \$414,297.00 |
| Bergen Community College | \$562,492.42 |
| Brookdale Community College | \$374,460.02 |
| Camden County College | \$814,193.78 |
| Essex County College | \$1,000,000.00 |
| Hudson County Community College | \$499,983.00 |
| Mercer County Community College | \$1,000,000.00 |
| Middlesex College | \$542,000.00 |
| Passaic County Community College | \$1,000,000.00 |
| Raritan Valley Community College | \$983,118.50 |
| Rowan College at Burlington County | \$1,000,000.00 |

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|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Salem Community College | \$398,100.00 |
| Union County College | \$998,800.00 |
| Bloomfield College | \$500,000.00 |
| Drew University | \$500,000.00 |
| Fairleigh Dickinson University | \$1,395,777.00 |
| Georgian Court University | \$200,000.00 |
| Rider University | \$500,000.00 |
| Saint Elizabeth University | \$498,860.00 |
| Saint Peter's University | \$500,000.00 |
| Seton Hall University | \$1,495,190.00 |
| Stevens Institute of Technology | \$849,042.30 |
| Total | \$28,500,000.00 |

The number of awards were based on the quantity and quality of applications received.

Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program (<https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/documents/pdf/hunger-free-campus.pdf>) (**About \$1 million**)

More than \$1 million in funding is supporting the goals of the “Hunger-Free Campus Act (<https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562019/approved/20190509b.shtml>),” signed by Governor Murphy in 2019 to establish a grant program to address food insecurity among students enrolled at public institutions. Funding is only available to public institutions that received “Hunger-Free Campus” designation for meeting all requirements during the 2020-21 academic year.

Grant funding will be used to address student hunger, leverage more sustainable solutions to address basic food needs on campuses, raise awareness of currently-offered campus services, and continue building strategic partnerships at the local, state, and national levels to address food insecurity among students.

A breakdown of the Hunger-Free grant award allocations by institution is as follows:

| Institution | Allocation |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Montclair State University | \$100,000.00 |
| Rowan University | \$100,000.00 |
| Rutgers, New Brunswick | \$99,647.00 |
| Rutgers, Newark | \$100,000.00 |
| Kean University | \$56,200.00 |
| Stockton University | \$80,038.94 |
| The College of New Jersey | \$99,082.99 |
| Camden County College | \$100,000.00 |
| Mercer County Community College | \$99,833.90 |
| Middlesex College | \$100,000.00 |
| Ocean County College | \$79,317.56 |
| Total | \$1,014,120.39 |

The number of awards were based on the quantity and quality of applications received. Additional institutions may not have received funding but obtained the “Hunger-Free Campus” designation for academic year 2020-21.

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