



## UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS - MINNESOTA

*Report dated April 8, 2021- FINAL REPORT*

1. On May 10, 2020, the University of St. Thomas ("St. Thomas") signed and returned to the Department of Education the required Certification and Agreement to receive emergency funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. St. Thomas intends to use no less than 50% of the funds received under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students.
2. In a notice dated May 10, 2020, the Department of Education confirmed that St. Thomas would receive \$2,502,601 pursuant to St. Thomas's Certification and Agreement pertaining to Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students.
3. As of April 8, 2021, all Emergency Financial Aid Grants totaling \$2,502,601 have been distributed to St. Thomas students.
4. Based on FAFSA submissions, St. Thomas is aware that at least 4,879 St. Thomas students are eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and thus eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act. St. Thomas has approximately 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students in total. Based on demographic data reported by its students, St. Thomas estimates that the total number of students eligible to participate in these programs is greater than 4,879 students. The application is open to all students and each is reviewed on an individual basis.
5. As of April 8, 2021, Emergency Financial Aid Grants under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act have been distributed to 2,814 students.
6. As of April 8, 2021, St. Thomas has used the following methods to determine which students receive the Emergency Financial Aid Grants and how much they receive:
  - a. St. Thomas made automatic grants to every FAFSA filer in a particular academic program where St. Thomas could readily identify common expenses incurred by all students in the program related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus. These grants were in the amount of \$750 per student, based on the estimated amount of the known, common expenses.
  - b. St. Thomas invited all of its eligible students to apply for Emergency Financial Aid Grants using an application that requires students to identify their requested grant amount, describe the expenses the grant will be used for, and describe how the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus caused the student to need the emergency grant. Consistent with guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, the application also requires students to attest under penalty of perjury that they meet each qualification to be eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. The amount of these grants usually is less than \$750, based on the estimated amount of common expenses St. Thomas anticipated students may have incurred related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus.
  - c. St. Thomas used a portion of the Emergency Financial Aid Grant funding to repay to St. Thomas the amount of certain emergency grants made to students under a separate student emergency assistance program for COVID 19-related financial hardships, which commenced prior to the university's receipt of the Emergency Financial Aid Grant funding. The repayment only pertained to emergency grants made to students who have submitted a FAFSA to St. Thomas and whose



grants were used for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus, based on individual application forms detailing the need for the grant and providing documentation, such as an invoice, evidencing the amount required. The amount of these grants usually was less than \$750, based on the funding request.

St. Thomas determined that limiting grants to \$750 for each eligible student in most cases would have a meaningful impact while still being able to provide emergency aid to as many eligible students as possible, while allowing for higher grants in circumstances where students demonstrated exceptional need.

7. St. Thomas developed program documents to guide the application and allocation process for the Emergency Financial Aid Grants to individual students and has widely publicized the availability of this funding, including through direct email, social media, on the university's intranet, and on the St. Thomas external website here: <https://www.stthomas.edu/covid19/current-student-families>. The program documents describe eligibility requirements, the potential grant amount, and guidance on how to apply for this funding. Attached are additional examples of notifications provided to students.

*May 15 - Excerpt of email sent to all students from President Julie Sullivan*

### **Student Financial Support**

I know that many of you and your families are facing financial struggles as a result of lost employment and other economic disruptions during this pandemic. Please know helping to meet your financial needs is of utmost importance to us.

Our number one fundraising priority is to raise funds to support hardship scholarships for our returning students. Funds raised will be made available through financial aid to help students pay their tuition and stay on track to graduate.

We also seek to help you meet living expenses and other costs you are struggling to meet as a result of the pandemic. As part of a coronavirus stimulus package approved by Congress, the University of St. Thomas has received federal funding to provide emergency cash grants to students. The federal CARES Act funds can be awarded to students who are eligible for federal financial aid. We invite all students eligible for federal financial aid and who have expenses related to the disruption of St. Thomas campus operations due to COVID-19 to apply to the [CARES Act Emergency Grants](#).

We also have dedicated internal funds and raised donor support to establish a St. Thomas emergency fund. We encourage students who are not eligible for the CARES ACT Emergency grants, including our DACA/Dreamer and international students, to apply for emergency grants under the [St. Thomas Student Emergency Assistance Program for COVID 19-Related Financial Hardship](#), which has broader eligibility guidelines.

*May 28 - Email sent to all students from our Office of Study Abroad*

Dear Spring 2020 Study Abroad Students,

As part of a coronavirus stimulus package approved by Congress, the University of St. Thomas has received \$2.5M in federal funding to provide emergency cash grants to students. The federal CARES Act funds can be awarded to students who are eligible for federal financial aid. We invite all students eligible for federal financial aid and have expenses related to the disruption of St. Thomas campus operations due to COVID-19 to apply to the [CARES Act Emergency Grants](#). **The CARES Act specifically calls out expenses related to study abroad travel and disruption to study abroad experiences as one of the categories to be eligible for a grant.**

St. Thomas recognizes that students across the university have been affected by the campus disruption due to COVID-19, including students who do not meet the eligibility criteria for a CARES Act emergency grant. We encourage students who are ineligible for the CARES ACT Emergency grants, including our DACA/Dreamer and international students, to apply for emergency grants under the [St. Thomas Student Emergency Assistance Program for COVID 19-Related Financial Hardship](#), which is not federally funded and has broader eligibility requirements.

Students may receive one COVID emergency grant each academic term under only one, and not both, of the COVID-19 student emergency grant programs maintained by St. Thomas. Grants will usually be \$750 or less. Applications for spring 2020 will be accepted until May 31, 2020. Students may apply for additional funding during summer 2020. Applications for summer 2020 will open June 1, 2020. Summer grants will be available to students who are registered for summer 2020 or fall 2020 classes.

Please let us know if you have questions.

*Below is the poster used in social media platforms and emails from St. Thomas to notify students of the Emergency Financial Aid Grants.*

Do you have expenses related to the disruption of St. Thomas campus operations due to COVID-19?



Apply for either a **CARES Act Emergency Grant** or **St. Thomas COVID-19 Emergency Grant**. Students may receive one COVID emergency grant each academic term. Grants will usually be \$750 or less.

INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:  
[link.stthomas.edu/emergencyfund](https://link.stthomas.edu/emergencyfund)