Dear Students,

The University of Houston is pleased to make available two sources of emergency financial aid to help you overcome economic hardships that have occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

UH has been granted $18.3 million through the federal CARES Act, which Congress has specifically designated for emergency grants for students. In addition, we are pleased to re-open the Cougar Emergency Fund, which continues to grow its balance thanks to the generosity of numerous individual donors and commitment to a $500,000 match by the UH Foundation and the James Wade Rockwell Endowment.

We believe a majority of our students have experienced some underlying expenses related to changes in campus operations. Therefore, a portion of the CARES Act funding will be distributed to all eligible UH students enrolled during the spring 2020 semester who meet the federal qualifications.

The balance of the CARES Act funding, as well as the Cougar Emergency Fund, will be awarded on a case-by-case basis through a single application process, the CARES Act Grant/Cougar Emergency Fund Request form. To get the application, please call the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid at 713-743-1010, option 5, or email at sfa@central.uh.edu.

CARES Act grants will be distributed as follows:

Blanket Distributions:

- UH is allocating $15.5 million of the CARES Act funding to blanket distributions.

- Undergraduate and graduate students who meet eligibility requirements will automatically receive between $225 and $825 each, with the amount primarily dependent on full- or part-time enrollment status. Additional grants will be awarded to students economically impacted by changes to on-campus housing.

- Students are expected to begin receiving disbursements within the next week. Students who may qualify for CARES Act funds are strongly encouraged to make sure their refund preference is up to date or establish a refund preference if they have never done so to ensure the fastest receipt of these funds.
Eligibility:

- For CARES Act funding, students must have demonstrated full eligibility for federal student aid through the receipt of a valid Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) as a result of completing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students must also have completed the federal verification process, if selected, and be making satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes.

- The Cougar Emergency Fund will cover students not eligible to file a FAFSA and/or expenses not authorized under the CARES Act, as deemed appropriate by the University.

Coverage:

- Our students have endured increased costs that range from upgraded technology needs and Internet speeds to unexpected deposits and childcare. The CARES Act allows coverage for food, housing, course materials, technology, health care and childcare.

Students must complete the CARES/CEF application to be considered for emergency aid from either fund. The application process will be open from May 4, 2020 until funds are exhausted.

The University of Houston is grateful to our federal leaders as well as the many generous individuals and organizations that are helping to offset expenses at this difficult and unprecedented time.

Sincerely,

Richard Walker, Ed.D.
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