



Press Release

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IBHE awards \$10.5 million in second round of GEER grants to Illinois institutions
Funds will be used to provide supports for students most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic

SPRINGFIELD – Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) have awarded \$10.5 million in grants through the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER) program to 21 institutions of higher education in Illinois. These funds will be used to provide academic and social-emotional learning supports for students most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially Black, Latino, low-income, first generation, working adult, and rural students. Grants to public institutions were allocated using a formula to ensure equitable distribution, and grants were awarded to non-public institutions through a competitive application process.

“The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented challenges for our students,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “For many of them, particularly those from historically disadvantaged groups, they struggled to recover. I’m proud to announce these relief grants for twenty-one institutions, which will empower colleges and universities to help students get back on track and give them the tools they need to succeed and graduate from their programs.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare and exacerbated the systemic inequities that have historically harmed our most vulnerable and deprived them of opportunities. We must act, and in Illinois we are committed to continuing to help,” said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton. “We know our institutions of education build up students to go further. With these grants, they can provide the extra support and care learners need to heal, continue their education, and reach higher.”

“We know that the effects of the pandemic were not felt equally and took a bigger toll on the populations that historically have been left behind,” said IBHE Executive Director Ginger Ostro. “These additional GEER funds will help institutions meet students’ needs and teach us valuable lessons about what it will take to close equity gaps and meet the goals in the state’s strategic plan for higher education, [A Thriving Illinois](#).”

These funds will help institutions better support students in their journey toward degree completion by improving the accessibility of academic advising and counseling resources and enhancing the quality of learning through digital tools and educator professional development. Grant funds will also help institutions invest in infrastructure for mental health and wellness by addressing gaps in mental health services on campus and improving the availability of counseling services.

This is the second round of GEER grants to Illinois institutions of higher education to help mitigate the effects of the pandemic. In the first round of GEER grants, 22 institutions were awarded grants, plus the University Center of Lake County, and were in large part used to recruit and retain students most in need.

Below are lists of GEER II grant recipient institutions and grant amounts. Formula grants are those that were awarded to the state’s public institutions through a formula to ensure equitable distribution of funds, and competitive grants were awarded to non-public institutions selected through an application and proposal process.

GEER II Formula Grant Awards

- Chicago State University: \$407,613
- Eastern Illinois University: \$403,671
- Governors State University: \$447,928
- Illinois State University: \$709,272
- Northeastern Illinois University: \$700,856
- Northern Illinois University: \$1,196,840
- Southern Illinois University – Carbondale: \$755,603
- Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville: \$624,059
- University of Illinois – Chicago: \$2,461,756
- University of Illinois – Springfield: \$164,798
- University of Illinois – Urbana/Champaign: \$787,393
- Western Illinois University: \$840,211

GEER II Competitive Grant Awards

- Aurora University: \$125,000
- Benedictine University: \$116,928
- East-West University: \$125,000
- Illinois College: \$50,644
- Millikin University: \$124,285
- National Louis University: \$96,285
- North Park University: \$115,697
- Roosevelt University: \$121,202
- Saint Xavier University: \$124,956

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