

**Profile of
Pioneers Helping Pioneers Emergency Grant Program
University of Wisconsin-Platteville
2022 Regents Diversity Award Program Recipient**

Highlights from nomination materials:

- The Pioneers Helping Pioneers Emergency Grant Program provides emergency financial support to students facing unexpected financial burdens. UW-Platteville has a significant number of first-generation and limited-income students. Providing them with the support they need to become successful college graduates is core to the university's values and mission.
- UW-Platteville has provided emergency grants to students since 2017. In spring 2020, the university created the Pioneers Helping Pioneers Emergency Grant using \$2.55 million from federal Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding, as well as \$428,000 in donations through the UW-Platteville Foundation.
- The program was originally implemented from the Dash Emergency Grant Program received from Ascendium Education Group in 2017. About \$400,000 was awarded to more than 450 students with more than 93% of recipients continuing their pursuit of higher education the semester after receiving an emergency grant.
- Over the past two years, the program helped more than 3,500 unique students, providing an average of \$1,600 per student, relieving these students of financial burdens that could hinder their education or cause them to withdraw from education. The university was able to help every student who requested financial support. Top areas for which students seek emergency assistance are tuition, housing, food, transportation, and utilities.
- The program provided not only emergency grants to students but also food boxes, grocery and gas cards, stress-relief activities, and longer checkout times for laptops.
- PHP Grant has been essential in closing opportunity and equity gaps for over 2,000 students, including students from historically underrepresented groups such as first generation, economically disadvantaged, and students of color; 95% of the spring/summer 2021 beneficiaries persisted or graduated; in fall 2020, 91% persisted or graduated.
- The program created professional development opportunities to support faculty and staff in better understanding the obstacles that many students face and suggestions for offering ongoing support inside and outside of the classroom.
- The program works with all departments; alumni, faculty, and staff have donated financially to support the program. Faculty and staff also have volunteered in off hours to help assist students.

In the words of colleagues:

- "I am fully supporting UW-Platteville's Pioneers Helping Pioneers Emergency Grant Program for its unprecedented success in providing essential emergency financial assistance to our students in need. Without this support, many of our students would not be able to continue their education."
—Dennis J. Shields, Chancellor, UW-Platteville
- "Over the past two years, we have been able to assist students from families who are recovering from natural disasters, facing chronic illnesses, unexpected unemployment, and a myriad of other challenges."
—Laura Franklin, Executive Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Director of Student Support Services, UW-Platteville