

Coronavirus Emergency Relief Fund (CERF)

June 23, 2020 – Weekly Update

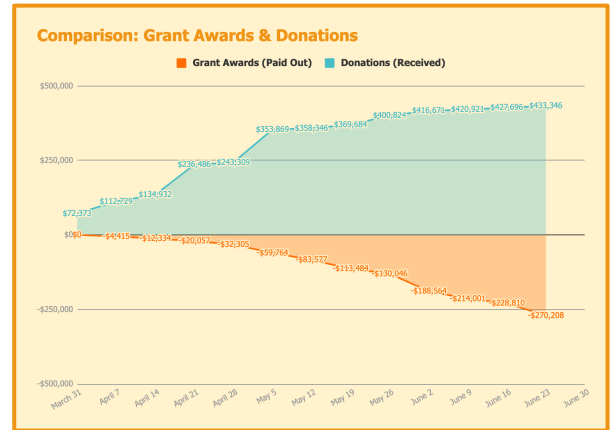


CERF ETHOS

Our goal is for residents to be able to **stay in their homes** and to maintain access to utility service that enables **students to be connected to school** and enables **all residents to be connected to food resources** and other necessities during this crisis.

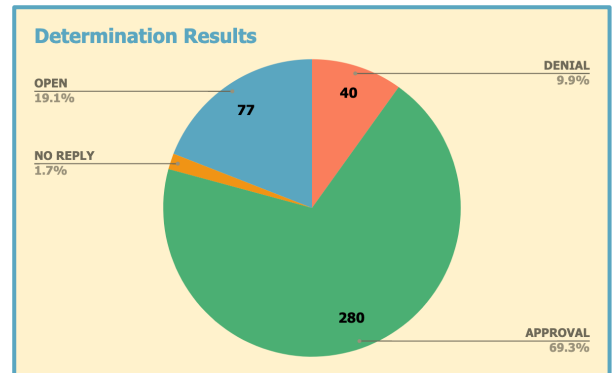
FUNDRAISING – \$433,346 as of June 23rd

The CERF is supported in part with grants from the **Princeton University Relief Fund** and the **Covid-19 Relief & Recovery Fund** of **Princeton Area Community Foundation**. We are grateful to the University, to PACF, and to the over **810 donors** who have contributed.

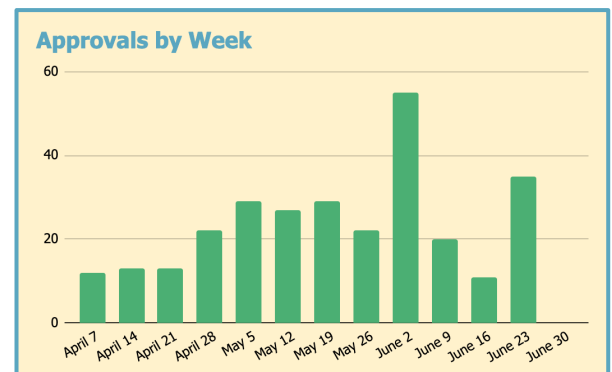
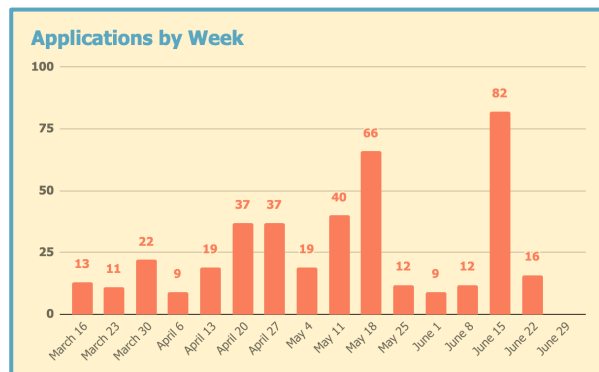


APPLICATIONS – 404 as of June 23rd

To date, we have been able to help **188 unique households** stay sheltered and connected to resources. Of the 404 applications received, 216 are renewals and 280 grants have been awarded. The large influx of renewal applications we saw in May occurred again in June and we have 77 open applications from the 82 received. While some applicants have begun a slow, part-time return to work, we are not seeing a meaningful end or a return to pre-COVID levels.



We continue outbound calls to former applicants to see if they need to reapply. In this way, we can manage the workflow and the impact to the team resources. Given the invoicing dates from the utility companies and the due dates for rent from landlords, the last 2 weeks of each month will remain unavoidably busy for the CERF team.



The 280 approved cases have received grants totaling just over **\$270,000**. The current average award rose again this week to **\$1,015.75**. We continue to receive initial applications however they represent less than 5 applications per week. At this award level and with our current funding, we will be able to help approximately 160 more applicants or times and have sufficient funding for approximately 6 weeks at the current average rate of applications received – 27 per week.



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PROCESS

We continue to adjust our existing process to accommodate a phased return to work. We are documenting continued unemployment or under-employment and working with applicants so we can support what will be a gradual return to work for most. Few, if any, will go from completely unemployed to fully re-employed so we want to make that transition as smooth as possible for applicants.

For each renewal application, case managers track changes in earnings and work with applicants to determine which bills they would like CERF to consider. If funding permits, each month as applicants income increases, the CERF award will decrease until applicants are able to earn their pre-COVID income.

The [New Jersey COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#) will open for applications beginning July 6th and the application window will remain open until July 10th. An unknown number of residents will be chosen via computerized lottery for up to 6 months of rental support. There are no plans for a second application window and while phone assistance will be available, it seems unlikely to be a viable submission option.

REASONS TO H.O.P.E. (Help One Person Everyday)

Princeton University has made us, and hundreds of thousands of “Dreamers” pretty hopeful this week. Many thanks to the legal (and veritable) Dream Team of Princeton Vice President and General Counsel **Ramona Romero**; Princeton Associate University Counsel **Wes Markham**; Microsoft Assistant General Counsel Cindy Randall; and Lindsay Harrison, litigator and partner at Jenner & Block who were able to champion Princeton Class of 2018 graduate **Maria Perales Sanchez** all the way to the Supreme Court.

We are optimistic that the Supreme Court decision will encourage legislators to enact permanent legal protections for Dreamers and are so very grateful to Princeton University for co-leading this important effort with Microsoft. Without this leadership and legal talent, many young people faced the frightening prospect of being forced to leave the United States – the country that they have called home. Perhaps equally important to the hope for dreamers in the ruling, is the accountability for the federal government. The court’s opinion reminded us all that capricious and arbitrary decisions are disallowed under the Administrative Procedure Act.

CERF TEAM

Intake Coordinators – this team answers the Human Services phone number and helps potential applicants navigate the application process.

- Katherine Cardona* – Princeton Recreation Department (PRD)
- Kimberly Figueroa-Martinez* – Human Services
- Sindy Sandoval* – Corner House

Steering Committee – in addition to processing intakes, members check to see if applicants have access to reliable sources of food and refer them to available resources when appropriate.

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| • Emily Becker* – friend of PCF | • Christian Martin* – friend of PCF |
| • Zoe D’Eugenio-Pinel* – friend of PCF | • Diane Paulsell* – Solidaridad Princeton |
| • Andrea Dinan* – Princeton High School & PCF | • Nicole Paulucci – PRD |
| • Jordan Goodwin – Princeton Community Village | • Trinidad Rodriguez* – JW Middle School & PCF |
| • Sharon Hurley – Princeton Senior Resource Center | • Angie Vargas*/Cecilia Avila* – Arm in Arm |

* = dual-language speaker

