



**DATE:** November 6, 2023

**TO:** Council Economic Development Committee

**FROM:** Chief Economic Development Officer

**SUBJECT:** Hayward Upward Economic Recovery Plan Update: Tuition Assistance Program

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Council Economic Development Committee receives updates on the progress of the Hayward Upward Economic Recovery Plan: Tuition Assistance Program.

## **SUMMARY**

The Tuition Assistance program, an ARPA-funded initiative within the Together for Hayward COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan, aims to provide financial assistance to residents. It enables them to attend courses at Chabot College, California State University East Bay, and other accredited technical schools, enhancing their employment competitiveness. This report provides an update on the program's current status and outlines next steps.

## **BACKGROUND**

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, San Francisco Bay Area businesses faced challenges in finding qualified workers due to a tight job market. The situation was exacerbated by high housing costs, impacting employee retention and recruitment, particularly for Hayward employers. The pandemic further complicated matters, leading to business closures, furloughs, and a shift in employment preferences. As the economy recovers, businesses encounter difficulties filling both previous and new positions, intensifying competition for skilled workers. Despite layoffs in the tech industry, a shortage persists in skilled technical and advanced manufacturing positions.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Tuition Assistance Program**

The Tuition Assistance Program is tailored to aid Hayward residents affected by COVID-19 or those seeking skill improvement for enhanced employability. Grantees must attend courses at designated institutions, including Chabot Community College, Cal State East Bay (CSUEB), or other accredited programs. The program, in collaboration with partners like Chabot College, CSUEB, and Eden Area ROP, manages recruitment, application review, and fund disbursement.

City staff actively promoted the program through the city website's dedicated landing page, press releases, and targeted social media posts in preparation for the Fall semester. Simultaneously, our partners utilized their media channels, email lists, and social media platforms to ensure broad awareness.

The microgrants range from \$500 to \$2,000, considering factors such as the program of study, cost, duration, and other aid received. To date, \$67,000 has been dispersed to 134 grantees. The grants prioritize high-, medium-, and low-priority programs, addressing industries with labor shortages and providing flexibility based on individual needs.

The program has had a diverse impact, reaching various ethnicities and demographic groups, including Hispanic/Latinx/Chicanx, multiracial, Black/African American, and more. Additional demographic data highlights characteristics such as single-parent status, low-income status, disability, and foster youth representation among grantees. The table below summarizes the demographics of grant receipts.

**Chart 1: Tuition Assistance Grant Recipient Demographics**

Ethnicity	Number of Students	Percentage of Grantees
Hispanic/Latinx/Chicanx	50	37%
Not Hispanic/Latinx/Chicanx	84	63%
Multiracial	62	46%
Multiracial: Black/African American/White	1	1%
Multiracial: Native American/American Indian/Alaskan Native/White	2	1%
Multiracial: Native American/Am. Indian/Alaskan Native & Black African American	4	3%
Multiracial: Asian/White	10	7%
Other Multi-Racial	45	34%
Black/African American	32	24%
Native American/American Indian/Alaskan Native	2	1%
White	19	14%
Asian	14	10%
Korean	1	1%
Asian Indian	1	1%
Filipino	3	2%
Vietnamese	4	3%

Chinese	5	4%
Middle Eastern/Arab	5	4%
Additional Demographic Data		
Single-Parent	51	38%
Low-Income	109	81%
Student with Disability	13	10%
Foster Youth	12	9%

**NEXT STEPS**

The Tuition Assistance Program is ongoing, with Chabot College and CSUEB accepting applications for the Fall 2023 semester. Efforts are underway to expand opportunities beyond Chabot and CSUEB by allowing recognition of subcontracted agencies including the Eden Area Regional Occupation Program (Eden Area ROP).

As of now, \$300,000 has been successfully disbursed to Chabot College and CSUEB for the grant program. The remaining \$100,000 is slated for disbursement, contingent on fulfilling contract deliverables. These deliverables encompass the provision of data related to grant recipients, facilitating long-term tracking, and enabling impact analysis of the grant funds. Additionally, part of the program involves diligent tracking of grantees' progress in completing their educational programs and securing meaningful employment.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Funded through the City's ARPA funds, the Tuition Assistance Program is allocated \$400,000. This report reflects the commitment of the City of Hayward to address the economic challenges brought about by the pandemic and contribute to the long-term prosperity of its residents and business community.

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