

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **NORTHWEST IOWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE RECEIVES DASH EMERGENCY GRANT FUNDS FROM GREAT LAKES HIGHER EDUCATION CORPORATION**

*31 colleges will help an estimated 4,000 low-income students stay on the path to graduation*

Northwest Iowa Community College will receive \$20,000 from the Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation through the Dash Emergency Grant Program which offers emergency grants to students who receive Federal Pell Grants.

The process is simple: students apply for small grants directly from their college when faced with an unexpected bill, such as a car repair or medical payment. Expenses are paid within 48 hours of the approved application. By quickly removing financial distractions, students don't lose focus on their studies and continue moving toward completion.

Community colleges provide a gateway to promising futures for students from diverse backgrounds, many who are older, lower income, working and/or raising families. They juggle multiple financial responsibilities and unforeseen expenses—often less than \$500—can threaten their ability to stay in college. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, just 20 percent of full-time students at public two-year institutions earn a degree within three years. Financial emergencies are among the reasons why so many students abandon their studies before they complete their degrees or certificates.

Great Lakes has awarded \$1.5 million in Dash grants to 31 colleges in Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin that have shown an extraordinary commitment to engaging with students who experience a financial crisis. Proof of this commitment is an institutional investment: each college is providing an escalating cash match for student emergency grants, both to meet students' immediate needs and move toward program sustainability. Over the duration of the grant period, upwards of 4,000 students stand to benefit from the Dash program.

“Great Lakes is pleased to provide more resources to colleges that are dedicated to supporting students in times of greatest need,” said Richard D. George, President and Chief Executive Officer of Great Lakes. “Emergency grants are a bridge to college completion and the financial security a community college credential can provide.”

Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates was established as a nonprofit group focused on a single objective: helping students nationwide prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education and student loan repayment. As a leading student loan guarantor and servicer, we have been selected by the U.S. Department of Education to provide assistance and repayment planning to more than 8 million borrowers—as well as assistance to colleges and lenders nationwide. Our group’s earnings support one of the largest and most respected education philanthropy programs in the country. Since 2006, we have committed nearly \$154 million in grant funding to promote higher education access and completion for students of color, low-income students, and first-generation students. For additional information, visit: [home.mygreatlakes.org](http://home.mygreatlakes.org).

For a complete list of the recipients of the 2016-2018 Dash emergency grant program visit: <https://community.mygreatlakes.org/community/strategy/scaling/dash-grant-recipients-2016.html>