Emergency Fund Supports Employees in Need

University Communications
November 2017

A sudden illness, a family crisis, a natural disaster. These are just a few of the many circumstances that might result in temporary financial hardship for UA employees.

To help employees in their time of need, the University established the UA Employee Emergency Fund, supported entirely by donations from the campus community. Any benefits-eligible employee can apply for one-time funding of up to $750 when faced with an unexpected, temporary hardship.

Most of the money in the fund is raised during the annual UA Cares [1] employee giving campaign, which is underway and runs through the end of the fall semester. Employees who donate to UA Cares through payroll deduction can select the Employee Emergency Fund as their charitable cause of choice in UAccess. Donations to the fund also are accepted year-round via the UA Foundation [2] website.

The Employee Emergency Fund was established in 2012 as a way for UA employees to support one another in times of need, by providing financial help with rent, utilities or other essential expenses.

"Some of the issues our fellow employees are having are heart-wrenching," said Ed Franklin, associate professor of agricultural education and a member of the committee that reviews applications for emergency funding. "It helps to open a wallet and give support to get them over a difficult time so they can continue what they do at the University of Arizona."

A committee of faculty, classified staff, appointed personnel and presidential appointees review confidential applications year-round. In many cases, the recipients of emergency funding are single parents or the breadwinners in their homes, Franklin said. Often, they have experienced financial difficulty in the wake of a challenging life event like a death in the family, a serious car accident, incarceration of a family member, or damage to the home from a natural disaster.

Since 2012, a total of 94 employees have been awarded more than $65,000 through the fund.

The Employee Emergency Fund is available to benefits-eligible employees, at any UA location, who have worked at the University for at least a year, said Sheila McGinnis, UA director of outreach and community partnerships. Applications [3] for funding can be submitted through the UA Cares website.

"It's not just for main campus. It's for all UA employees, including extension staff in rural areas throughout the state," McGinnis said.

While donations to the fund are accepted year-round, the biggest push for fundraising comes during the UA Cares campaign. Offices that organize UA Cares events can choose the
Employee Emergency Fund, or any other UA program or community charity, as a beneficiary.

The Financial Services Office selected the Employee Emergency Fund and Arizona Assurance [4] as the shared beneficiaries for three FSO fundraising events this year: a "penny war," a raffle last month that raised $150, and a doughnut, bagel and fruit sale, which will take place Thursday from 7-9 a.m. on the first floor of the University Services Building.

Renee Williams, a UA Cares coordinator and senior accountant in the Financial Services Office, who is helping organize the FSO fundraisers, first learned about the Employee Emergency Fund during a meeting of UA Cares coordinators.

"It's very beneficial," she said of the program. "There are situations that arise when people need assistance, and it's nice to know your employer is available to help, too, not just your family and friends."

Source URL: https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/emergency-fund-supports-employees-need

Links