

Financial Aid at RRC  
Overview and Policies and Procedures  
Spring Semester 2024

### **Administration of Financial Aid**

RRC's financial aid process is overseen and administered by Rabbi Amber Powers, Executive Vice President, with support from Cheryl Tyson, Director of Human Resources and Administration and Alina Potts, Administrative Assistant. If you have questions related to financial aid, please reach out to Amber for support.

Financial aid at RRC has two primary components: student loans and scholarships (grants).

### **Student Loans**

RRC does not directly serve as a lender- eligible RRC students can take out loans from the Federal Government or through a private lender. RRC uses an outside contractor, Nora Downey, as our loan administrator. All student loan questions should be directed to Nora at [ndowney@rrc.edu](mailto:ndowney@rrc.edu).

### **Applying for Scholarships**

All incoming and returning RRC students are invited to apply for need-based scholarships each year. The financial aid application process requires three steps:

1. submission of RRC's financial aid application form, which is made available each February
2. submission of personal tax return form (1040) from the previous year for both you and any permanent partner(s)
3. completion of the FAFSA (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>)

All three parts of the financial aid application process must be completed by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Need-based Scholarship Determination Process**

RRC uses the information provided on the financial aid form, tax return, and FAFSA report to determine each student's degree of need relative to the other students applying for aid that year. Need is rated on a scale from 0-5, with 5 being the category of greatest need. The assessment of need is based on the student's SAI (student aid index) or EFC (expected family contribution) as determined by the federal government.

RRC administrators use professional discretion to adjust the assessment of need based upon the additional information provided in the application process. Need ratings are frequently adjusted because of factors such as high medical expenses, high level of indebtedness or lack of a financial safety net.

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The RRC need-based assessment process assumes financial independence. Those students who receive or anticipate receiving financial support from family members, outside scholarships or any other source are required to disclose that support on the financial aid application form.

Students must re-apply for financial aid each year. RRC aims to maintain its level of need-based support for each student from year to year unless the student's financial situation has changed significantly based on the latest need assessment.

### **Merit Scholarships**

While the vast majority of RRC scholarships are need-based, RRC also offers merit scholarships to outstanding applicants to incentivize and encourage enrollment and recognize overall excellence or outstanding achievement. Applicants are considered for a merit scholarship through nomination by the Admissions Committee. There is no set definition of merit for this purpose- members of the Admissions Committee use their own judgment and assessment to determine which student or students to nominate each year.

As an expression of our commitment to economic justice, our merit scholarship awards are need-informed, meaning that we take the student's financial need into consideration when determining the total award amount. Merit scholarships are only given at the time of admission- RRC does not currently offer any merit scholarships to returning students. While most merit scholarships awarded at admission are for one year, occasionally multi-year merit scholarships are awarded.

### **Scholarship Pool**

Currently 85% of the RRC student body receives scholarships from RRC. The total amount awarded for the current academic year was \$615,000 and included both need-based and merit-based scholarships, which will be described below. The scholarships ranged from \$3,000 to \$23,000 and the average award was \$13,370.

RRC's scholarship funds come directly from philanthropic giving to the College. Scholarships that are funded in perpetuity are held within RRC's endowment. RRC also has a scholarship reserve fund. Scholarship donors have a choice whether to endow their scholarship gift or contribute it to the scholarship reserves. Most of RRC's scholarship funds do not have specific eligibility criteria and can be used for any eligible student. Currently, the annual withdrawal from the endowment provides approximately \$215,000 in available scholarship funds. Because that amount is not sufficient to meet our students' needs, RRC also draws extensively upon our scholarship reserve fund as well. Scholarship giving is a top priority for RRC's fundraising efforts.

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### **Notification of Award**

Once RRC determines the award amount, a specific fund is assigned to that award. Students receive written notification of their award amount and of the scholarship fund in early May.

### **Part-time Enrollment**

The annual award letter stipulates that the award amount assumes full-time enrollment. If a student registers for less than a full-time courseload, their financial aid award for that semester is directly prorated. There is no penalty for part-time enrollment- if a student enrolls part-time, their scholarship is adjusted in accordance with the actual amount of tuition due. If a student needs assistance understanding the financial impact of part-time enrollment, Amber is available to help.

### **Leave of Absence**

A student who takes a leave of absence will not receive financial aid from RRC while on leave.

### **Tuition and Billing**

RRC's tuition and fees are set annually and are published on [www.rrc.edu](http://www.rrc.edu) each June. RRC's Finance Department is responsible for sending tuition bills before each semester begins. Billing questions or payment plan arrangements should be addressed to Robert Chavez, Director of Operations.

RRC reserves the right to offer discounts off its published tuition rates. At the present time, RRC offers two discounts: a 15% discount for parents of dependent children who have demonstrated financial need and a 15% discount for international students.

### **Award Adjustments**

Students who experience a substantial negative change to their financial situation mid-year are able to request that their scholarship award be re-evaluated based on current circumstances. Please contact Amber to report substantial changes and to initiate the re-evaluation process. There is no guarantee that re-evaluation will lead to an award adjustment.

### **Support with the Financial Aid Process**

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RRC understands that applying for financial aid can be overwhelming and aims to support students throughout the process. If you have questions or concerns related to financial aid, please contact Amber at any time.