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BTC Foundation offers emergency grants to students, negotiations continue

BY SAMANTHA WOHLFEIL

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BELLINGHAM - With the first scheduled week of school ending without a single syllabus handed out or lecture given, Bellingham Technical College and Bellingham Education Association, the faculty union, likely will meet in court Monday, Sept. 30, over a potential court order to end the faculty strike.

While students waited for financial aid that can't legally be dispersed until classes start, the BTC Foundation held an emergency meeting Friday morning, Sept. 27, and voted to provide emergency grants to students in need.

"We specifically identified students with the highest financial need during this time, and we corresponded with them directly," said Dean Fulton, BTC Foundation director.

However, any student waiting on financial aid can apply for the grants. Students should contact the Financial Aid Office at 360-752-8564 during business hours to see if they are eligible.

The Foundation gave \$25,000 and college President Patricia McKeown donated \$5,000 of her personal money to the emergency fund. Donations to the fund can be made at [this BTC Foundation webpage](#).

"We're not expecting any students to pay back these \$250 emergency grants," Fulton said. "Hopefully they'll address some basic needs during this time, such as food, gas or a little rent money."

Fulton said the funds likely will be exhausted by Monday, so those most in need should try to contact the college right away.

The school is also offering letters for students to give landlords to appeal for extensions on rent payments coming up early next week.

BEA and BTC representatives met again Friday afternoon to discuss the school's latest proposal.

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