



Press Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On August 18, 2025, the National HEP/CAMP Association filed a lawsuit to compel the U.S. Department of Education to release the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 federal grants for the High School Equivalency Program (HEP) and College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) programs around the country as directed by the *Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025*.

“For over 50 years, HEP/CAMP programs have provided hundreds of thousands of students, especially students from low-income, agricultural backgrounds, with the critical support and resources to excel academically and professionally. We regret that we are forced to file this lawsuit. However, HEP/CAMP programs are too important to agricultural workers and rural communities and must receive the funding that Congress voted on and appropriated,” shared National HEP/CAMP Association President Greg Contreras.

“The Department of Education’s delay in releasing HEP/CAMP grants have already forced many of the over 100 HEP/CAMP projects across the country to lay off staff and to prepare for the closure of projects. The closure of these programs located at trade schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges and universities will mean that nearly 7,000 students throughout the country will not receive the support they need this year to obtain their high school equivalency credential or succeed in higher education” said Katie Covington, President-Elect of the National HEP/CAMP Association.

The HEP/CAMP program has had an over 50-year record of success:

- **HEP/CAMP programs have been highly effective and have the data to demonstrate this.** HEP is designed to help migrant and seasonal farm workers and their family members who are 16 and older but lack a high school diploma (or its equivalent). According to the U.S. Department of Education, during the 2023-2024 year, 68.2% of HEP students who completed their course of study earned a high school equivalency diploma (HSED) or its equivalent, and 83.9% of HEP students improved their job status or enrolled in the military. CAMP is designed to assist migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their family members while enrolled in college, and 76.2% of CAMP participants successfully completed their first year at an IHE and 96.2% continued onto their second year in college.

- **HEP/CAMP programs create jobs and stimulate economic activity in the rural areas where many of these programs are administered.** These grant awards expand educational and employment opportunities for students from agricultural worker families yielding positive financial impact for both the students and the greater American society.
- **HEP/CAMP students have excelled as a direct result of participation in these programs.** For example, a HEP program in Texas supported a student to earn her high school equivalency diploma, which served as the basis for her to obtain a college degree, and she is now pursuing a Master's Degree in Defense and Strategic Studies. The same program empowered another student to overcome financial difficulties to earn his HSED and now proudly serves in the U.S. Army. In Oregon, a CAMP program helped four siblings earn their Associate's Degrees before transferring to various universities to earn their Bachelor's Degrees. They now work in business, education, and counseling professions, contributing to American society. These examples are representative of the hundreds of thousands of former HEP/CAMP alumni who benefited directly from these life-changing, generational-changing programs.

Miriam Bocchetti, Past President of the National HEP/CAMP Association concludes, "Agricultural workers feed America and deserve the opportunity for their dependents to pursue educational opportunities. We hope that the U.S. Department of Education will release these grants as soon as possible to ensure the continuation of these highly effective programs that have provided much needed support and resources to students from agricultural communities."