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20 ELITE UNIVERSITIES GET \$2.3 BILLION IN STIMULUS AWARDS

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The \$787 billion stimulus package was sold to Americans in early 2009 as support for “shovel-ready” infrastructure improvements. Even so, generous awards have been made to hundreds of the nation’s colleges and universities. Those awards have taken the form of grants, contracts, and loans and have been justified as investments in the higher education infrastructure.

Using *Recovery.gov* to retrieve information on the recipients and amounts of those awards, Mayo Research Institute focused on the top 20 elite universities and discovered that a total of \$2.3 billion was awarded to those top-drawer institutions with Michigan topping the list at \$203.6 million. The eight Ivy League universities alone got a total of \$716.3 million. Brown is not listed below because its \$26.7 million award did not put it in the top 20.

	<i>millions</i>
Michigan	\$ 203.6
Stanford	195.0
North Carolina	165.2
Harvard	145.6
Johns Hopkins	137.3
Penn	130.5
UCLA	124.9
Columbia	122.3
Cal Tech	121.5
Duke	119.5
Emory	109.7
Cornell	107.7
Yale	101.5
MIT	99.4
Washington St. Louis	95.4
Northwestern	93.5
USC	74.3
Chicago	55.5
Dartmouth	44.3
Princeton	37.7
TOTAL Top 20	2284.4

We could not find information on the amount awarded to Virginia or California-Berkeley.

The \$2.2 billion total does not include other elite universities that received stimulus awards such as Rice (\$22.7 million), Carnegie Mellon (\$26.9 million), and Georgetown (\$20.7

million) because their awards were not big enough to break into the top 20 list. Other less prestigious universities that in some cases received more generous awards than some of the top 20 elite universities, such as football powers Florida (\$112.0 million) and Ohio State (\$91.8 million), are not included in the top 20 list of elites.

Nor does the list include funds awarded to university systems such as the University of California Regents that got \$985.0 million and the California State University Systems that received \$716.5 million.

We note with special interest the \$153.5 million award to the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy headquartered in Washington DC.

Universities typically find it easy to grow larger in terms of enrollment, facilities, and degree programs. Downsizing is an entirely different matter. The Louisiana Legislature is struggling to find funds to “backfill” the nearly \$300 million in stimulus awards that will not be available to higher education in the coming fiscal year. Other states no doubt face a similar problem. They are learning the hard lesson that stimulus awards can be a mixed blessing. And the American taxpayer is discovering that even prominent private universities with billions in their endowments have a voracious appetite for the easy dollars doled out by the federal government.

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