

June 5, 2024

Dear Albizu Students,

Albizu University will be distributing Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds received through the American Rescue Plan ("ARP"). Eligible Students MUST accept their grant awards via electronic signature in Ellucian on or before June 12, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. (noon) in order to receive the Emergency Aid Grant offered. Please review this communication to determine your eligibility and learn about the protocol that must be followed.

### **Background**

The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III) is authorized by the American Rescue Plan (ARP), Public Law 117-2, signed into law on March 11, 2022, providing \$39.6 billion in support to institutions of higher education to serve students and ensure learning continues during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The HEERF III ARP funds are in addition to funds authorized by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (CRRSAA / HEERF II), Public Law 116-260 and the Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security (CARES / HEERF I) Act, Public Law 116-136.

The ARP provides that Student Emergency Aid Grants can be used by students for "any component of their cost of attendance" or for "emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health care) or child care". Students determine how they may use their emergency financial aid grant within the allowable uses.

Students who are or were enrolled in an institution of higher education since the start of the COVID-19 national emergency (as of March 13, 2020) are eligible for Emergency Aid Grants from the HEERF, regardless of whether or not they completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or are eligible for Title IV. The Department's final rule on student eligibility for HEERF states that all students who are or were enrolled in an institution of higher education during the COVID-19 national emergency are eligible for emergency

financial aid grants from the HEERF, regardless of whether they completed a FAFSA or are eligible for Title IV. That includes citizens, permanent residents, refugees, asylum seekers, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients, other DREAMers, and similar undocumented students. Further, students exclusively enrolled in distance education courses are eligible for emergency financial aid grants under ARP.

## **Allocation**

Albizu University received a total allocation of \$4,318,539 in funds from HEERF III. The total allocation is divided into two equal portions, for student emergency aid grants and institutional aid grants.

The ARP requires institutions to use the student portion to prioritize Emergency Aid Grants to those students with “exceptional need”. The US Department of Education guidance identified “students who receive Pell grants” as an example of identifying students with exceptional need. Student Emergency Aid Grants have already been issued using the total amount allocated from the student portion of the ARP HEERF III funding

The institutional portion of the ARP HEERF III allocation may be used to cover institutional costs, in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education. The institutional portion from APR HEERF III may also be used to offer additional Student Emergency Aid Grants and Albizu has set aside additional institutional grant funding for this purpose, as further outlined below.

Albizu University has already allocated the minimum of \$2,159,270 to provide Emergency Aid Grants (“Grants”) to students of the Miami and San Juan Campuses, and the Mayagüez University Center, which was allocated in accordance with the requirements of HEERF III to prioritize grants to students with “exceptional” need.

Having distributed the entire portion of the ARP funds allocated for Emergency Aid Grants (“Grants”), Albizu University will be awarding additional Emergency Aid Grants using funds from the Institutional Portion of the HEERF III funding, The University will make this additional distribution by prioritizing grants to students with “exceptional need” in accordance with the requirements of HEERF III.

Prioritization of students with exceptional need under HEERF III will be accomplished by awarding the highest award amounts to Pell Grant recipients. Eligible Students who were not Pell recipients will be awarded grants in varying amounts based on the student’s

Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The formulas below provide details on how each category of student is determined.

### **Distribution at Albizu University**

Albizu University is allocating a \$965,877 supplemental amount from the institutional funds to award student Grant awards. This will result in a total allocation of \$965,877 from HEERF III funds made towards student grants.

Albizu University will distribute the funds for the Grants in line with the guidance provided by the United States Department of Education (USDE) at the time of the distribution.

The Student Aid Grant funds under HEERF III will be distributed to Eligible Students. Eligible Student is defined as a student who:

- 1) completed a FAFSA before March 15, 2024 or an Institutional Assistance Request Form by June 12, 2024;
- 2) are or would be considered Pell recipients in the 2023-2024 year on the FAFSA or equivalent information on the Institutional Assistance Request Form; and
- 3) as of March 15, 2024 were registered in the Spring 2024 term as active students or on LOA status.

The funds will be allocated for distribution among all Eligible Students in accordance with the formula described below. The formula provides for three categories of student grant allocations. These categories of allocations allow Albizu to prioritize students with the greatest need based on the information available through the students' FAFSAs or the Institutional Assistance Request Form. Students who are not eligible for Title IV funds must submit the Institutional Assistance Request Form to be included on the grant allocation.

The distribution formula is as follows:

#### **I. Pell Recipients**

Pell students are Eligible Students who

- 1) completed a FAFSA before March 15, 2024;
- 2) are or would be considered Pell recipients in the 2023-2024 year on the FAFSA; and
- 3) as of March 15, 2024 were registered in the Spring 2024 term as active students or on LOA status.

Estimated award per student who meets these criteria is \$625. This amount is subject to change.

**II. Non-Pell Recipients with EFC equal to zero (0) or High Need on the Institutional Assistance**

Eligible Students with an EFC of zero (0) (“TIV/0”) are students who meet the following criteria:

- 1) completed a FAFSA before March 15, 2024 or an Institutional Assistance Request Form by June 12, 2024;
- 2) are or would be considered Pell recipients in the 2023-2024 year on the FAFSA or equivalent information on the Institutional Assistance Request Form; and
- 3) as of March 15, 2024 were registered in the Spring 2024 term as active students or on LOA status.

Estimated award per student who meets these criteria is \$300. This amount is subject to change.

**III. Non-Pell Recipients with EFC equal to one (1) or more**

Eligible Students with an EFC of 1 or more (“TIV/1”) students who meet the following criteria:

- 1) completed a FAFSA before March 15, 2024 or an Institutional Assistance Request Form by June 12, 2024;
- 2) are or would be considered Pell recipients in the 2023-2024 year on the FAFSA or equivalent information on the Institutional Assistance Request Form; and
- 3) as of March 15, 2024 were registered in the Spring 2024 term as active students or on LOA status.

Estimated award per student who meets these criteria is \$150. This amount is subject to change.

Eligible Students who qualify for grant funds in one of the categories under the above formulas and who chose to accept the funds will be required accept or reject the award through Ellucian, the Student Server Service platform.

**Important Notes to Accept Grants Timely**

1. Eligible Students MUST accept their grant awards via electronic signature in Ellucian on or before June 12, 2024 at 12:00 p.m. (noon) in order to receive the Emergency Aid Grant offered;
2. There is NO APPEAL process if a student misses the deadline to accept the grant.

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If a student does not accept their emergency financial aid grant by June 12, 2024, the institution will rescind the award and may redistribute the funds to other students. It is important that each student understands the purpose of the grant and certify that these funds will be utilized for the established purpose. To that effect, the personal agreement set in the Ellucian Student Server Service platform—that can be accessed by all Albizu students—will be utilized.

If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Financial Aid.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nelson E. Soto". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "N" and "S".

Nelson E. Soto, PhD

President