

Federal Emergency Assistance Fund for COVID-19 Students
CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES)
CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE AND RELIEF SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT (CRRSAA)
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)
Quarterly Report on Thursday, September 30, 2021

I- ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FEDERAL ACT

On Thursday, April 9, 2020, the President of the University, Dr. Ana E. Cucurella received official communication from the United States Department of Education, notifying us that both the President and the Congress of the United States approved under Section 18004 € the funds of the law "Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security" also known as the "**CARES Act**" with the primary purpose of assisting educational institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

II- CERTIFICATION

On April 13, 2020, Dr. Cucurella, President of Caribbean University signed the "*Certification and Agreement for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act*" and on April 22, 2020 the "*Certification and Agreement for the Institutional Portion of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund formula Grants Authorized by Section 18004(a)(1) of the Coronavirus Aid, relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act*", and both documents were sent electronically to the U.S. Department of Education.

III- ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FEDERAL CARES, CRRSAA & ARPA

A- HEERF I – Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES)

The Federal Department of Education allocated to Caribbean University the amount of \$3,713,976, of which fifty percent representing the amount of \$1,856,988 will be used to provide *emergency financial aid grants* to eligible students. The eligibility criteria and the methodology of the amount to be distributed by level and academic term

are detailed in the document called "Agreement for the Distribution of the Financial Aid Subsidy to Students under the Law of Aids, Subsidies and Economic Security under the Coronavirus Act (Cares)".

- ✚ All publications, correspondences sent to students, eligibility criteria for the distribution of outstanding funds for students, final reports of the students benefited, and amount distributed by academic level, and final information of the funds highlighted to the University can be obtained on the University's website: Caribbean.edu/ayuda-de-emergencias-heef/.

B- HEERF II – Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA)

The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) is authorized by the Coronavirus Aid and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA), Public Law 116-260, enacted on December 27, 2020.

In total, the CRRSAA authorizes \$81.88 billion in support of education nationwide, in addition to the \$30.75 billion quickly provided last spring through the Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security Act (CARES), Public Law 116-136.

On January 2021, Caribbean University received an allowance of \$1.856,988.00, to assist our students during this catastrophic COVID-19 pandemic that has adversely affected the entire planet. In the same way, the federal government allocated the same portion of funds so that the University could transfer in an effective, agile, and safe way its face-to-face classes to online classes, so that all our professors and students could continue and fulfill their classes.

The federal government has highlighted these funds to support our students with expenses related to the interruption of university operations due to the coronavirus, such as but not limited to housing, food, medical expenses, acquisition of electronic equipment, technology and internet, tuition expenses (tuition, fees, and laboratories), and expenses of care of dependents.

C- HEERF III – American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the "**American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA 117-2)**." This third allocation of federal funds from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (*HEERF*) was established to prevent, assist, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III)" is authorized by the **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**, Public Law 117-2, enacted on March 11, 2021, which provides funding in support of higher education institutions to serve students and ensure that learning continues during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The **ARPA** Funds are in addition to the funds authorized by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA), Public Law 116-260, and the Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security Act (CARES), Public Law 116-136.

IV- AGREEMENT FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE FINANCIAL AID SUBSIDY TO STUDENTS UNDER HEERF

1. The University undertakes to use at least fifty percent of the aid granted to assist students enrolled during the period of the crisis developed by the global PANDEMIC of COVID-19 and which has caused the interruption of institutional services and the offer of face-to-face classes.
2. The funds advanced to the University will be used *only* to make the direct payment to the students who will assist you to partially cover the following expenses:
 - a- Foods
 - b- Housing
 - c- Materials required for courses
 - d- Technology
 - e- Health Care
 - f- Childcare
3. The University undertakes not to use the advanced funds to reimburse itself for costs or expenses, including but not including costs associated with significant changes caused to the change of modality in teaching due to the coronavirus and/or any reimbursement or other benefits that the Institution previously issued to students.

4. The University retains discretion to determine the amount of each individual emergency financial aid allowance in accordance with all applicable laws, including non-discrimination laws.
5. The Secretary of the Federal Department of Education strongly recommends that the Financial Aid Administrator exercise his or her professional judgment available under Section 479 of the Higher Education Act, to make any adjustments to his or her individual assessment (on a case-by-case basis), to exclude individual emergency financial aid allowances from the calculation of a student's expected family contribution.
6. The University in no way, can withhold funds intended for students. Similarly, the University has up to a period of twelve (12) months to award the outstanding funds to students enrolled in the different terms and academic levels.
7. After distribution and payment of emergency funds to students, the University must:
 - a- Within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of Certification, notify the Federal Department of Education of the distribution and use of emergency funds.
 - b- After the first report, every forty-five (45) days progress reports will continue to be sent on how it was determined to distribute funds to students, the amount that was allocated to each student, how the allocation of funds was calculated, and instructions offered to students about this federal aid.
8. In addition, you agree to document the continued payment to employees and contractors during the period of the interruption or closure of the institution caused by the coronavirus, including specific details about the actions and determinations related to these processes and in compliance with Section 18006 of the *Cares Act*.

v- ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA & AVERAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS TO STUDENTS

A- HEERF I – CARES

1. Have completed the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Financial Aid) and students without the FAFSA but eligible to complete it.
2. Be an eligible U.S. citizen or non-citizen
3. Valid Social Security Number
4. Men under 26 years of age, have enrolled in the Selective Service
5. Evidence of having completed high school
6. Have active student status, be currently enrolled

(1) Maximum average amount to be offered per Student : \$ 400.00 a \$1,200.00

a- Regular Students (Undergraduates, Master's, Doctorate)

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|--|---|-----------|
| 1- Enrolled in the terms of January 2020 | : | \$ 400.00 |
| 2- Enrolled in Summer 2020 | : | \$ 400.00 |
| 3- Enrolled in the terms of August 2020 | : | \$ 400.00 |

b- New Students - Freshmen

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------|
| 1- Enrolled in Summer 2020 | : | \$ 500.00 |
| 2- Enrolled in the terms of August 2020 | : | \$ 500.00 |

c- Students Short Career Programs








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|----------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 1- Enrolled in January 2020 (2Q) | : | \$ 400.00 |
| 2- Enrolled in May 2020 (3Q) | : | \$ 400.00 |
| 3- Enrolled in August 2020 (1Q) | : | \$ 400.00 |

d- A reserve fund has been created to serve students with a high economic need and who can present evidence of this.

e- If there is any surplus of funds, it will be distributed equitably among undergraduate students who enroll in 15 or more credits in the August 20/2U semester.

B- HEERF II – CRRSAA

To be eligible for **CRRSAA** funding, you must meet the requirements set forth for federal financial aid programs, according to the Federal Department of Education; for more information on these requirements, you can visit: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements>.

1. Be admitted as a regular student in any of the academic programs of the University, and at any academic level. Understand, short career programs, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and doctorates.
2. Have completed the 2020-2021 Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA) and demonstrate exceptional financial need.
3. Be an eligible citizen or non-citizen of the United States
4. Complete the CRRSAA Application in its entirety.
5. Some examples of unexpected expenses that may include
 -  Technology and Internet access, necessary for success in distance learning
 -  Food and necessities
 -  Housing Assistance
 -  Emergency medical bill and expenses incurred to assist the student's or family's mental health
 -  Child and dependent care expenses
 -  Unexpected costs caused by the COVID-19 situation
 -  For further questions or additional information, the student should send an email to: COVID19@caribbean.edu.
6. The University will limit itself to answering the emails received through the institutional emails of our students (please, not personal emails).
7. In the evaluation of CRRSAA Applications received, priority will be given to any student who reflects a high exceptional financial need, such as students with a family contribution (CF) of zero (0), who in turn would be eligible for one hundred percent (100%) of the Federal Pell Grant.
 - a- Undergraduate Students and Short Careers enrolled in the semester, accelerated terms or trimesters from January through May, and summer 2021:
 - From \$400 to \$5,500, depending on the economic need that each student reflects and their academic load in the semester, accelerated terms and summer terms in which they are enrolled.

- b- Students enrolled in Master's quarters: From \$400.00 to \$1,600.00
 - ✚ Depending on the financial need reflected in the Financial Aid Office's need analysis and the academic load in which you are enrolled for the quarters to be considered.
- c- Students enrolled in PhD quarters or Blend Learning: From \$400.00 to \$2,200.00
 - ✚ Depending on the financial need reflected in the Financial Aid Office's need analysis and the academic load in which you are enrolled for the quarters to be considered.
- d- Short Careers (May through August 2021) – 12 credits or more \$1,200.00 up to \$2,500
 - ✚ Depending on the financial need reflected in the Financial Aid Office's need analysis and the academic load in which you are enrolled in the semesters that were considered for this assignment, it is understood, 21/3Q, 21/3C y 21/3V.

C- HEERF III ARPA

1. The University guarantees that the funds received for students will be used solely to offer financial aid to all students who are enrolled as a student at the University.
 - a. On May 14, 2021, under the federal register "Final Rule of HEERF", the new definition of "student" is established, which is any student who is or has been enrolled since March 13, 2020, the date on which the National Emergency on the Coronavirus is declared.
 - b. Students are not required to be eligible for Federal Financial Aid Title IV funds to receive HEERF grants.
 - i. Students who are or were enrolled during the covid-19 national emergency are eligible for HEERF emergency financial aid, whether or not they have completed the Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA), or whether or not they are eligible for HEA Title IV funds.
 - c. Priority will be given to *students with exceptional needs*, such as students eligible for the Federal Pell Grant, or students with *extraordinary financial circumstances*.
 - d. Beyond Pell's eligibility, other types of exceptional needs could include students who are eligible for other federal or state aid is need-based, or have faced exceptional expenses, such as job loss (either the student or their parents, or spouses), reduced income, or food or housing insecurity.

- e. Undocumented or international students are eligible for these funds, as long as they have exceptional needs in order to receive funding from these programs.
 - 1. This includes and is not limited to citizens, permanent residents, refugees, asylum seekers, DACA recipients, other DREAMers, and undocumented students.
- f. In no way will the University allow discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or sex in the distribution of these emergency funds to students. See, for example, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., (Title VI), 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq. (Rehabilitation Act), 20 U.S.C. § 1681 (Title IX).
- g. The institution will not impose on you how to spend the emergency aid money received.
 - 1. The student may use these funds to cover any component of the cost of education or for expenses incurred due to the emergency of the covid pandemic, such as and not limited to tuition, food, housing, health expenses (including expenses incurred for mental health), expenses for caring for children or dependents, or expenses incurred to maintain distance study (electronic equipment and internet).
- h. Emergency funds under HEERF are not taxable to the beneficiary of such funds.
- i. HEERF emergency funds will not be considered for the calculation of the student's effective family contribution (EFC).
- j. HEERF funds are not considered federal financial aid funds, so the granting of these funds to students who have not completed the process to receive Title IV funds, such as additional documents required under the verification process, etc., cannot be stopped.
- k. If the student does not cash his check on time, it is the responsibility of the University to contact and guide him on the benefit of HEERF, before canceling the check.
- l. Funds recovered because of canceled checks (whether the student rejects it or for any other circumstance), will be re-distributed such funds to other eligible students who still reflect economic need.

2. Eligibility Requirements

Students who are eligible to participate in ARPA funds must meet the following requirements established for this program. For more information about the requirements, you can visit:

<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements>.

- a. Be enrolled in any of the academic programs of the University, and at any academic level, during the different academic terms from August to December 2021.
- b. Understand Short Career Programs, Associate Degrees, Baccalaureates, Masters and Doctorate.
- c. Have completed the Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA) 2021-2022.
- d. Demonstrate exceptional economic need.
- e. Students' beneficiaries of the Federal PELL Grant, and all those students with high economic need who do not receive the Federal PELL.
- f. Students who earned an "EFC" between zero (0) to \$5,846.00, during the process of completing their academic year 'Free Application for Federal Student Aid' (FAFSA) 2021-2022.
- g. Students who demonstrate extraordinary financial need including, by way of example, a loss of employment, reduced income, food or housing insecurity, extraordinary medical expenses due to the pandemic of the COVID-19, among others.
 - i. Any student who identifies with any of these examples and whose EFC of their FAFSA is greater than zero (0), should immediately contact their Financial Aid Officer, to guide them on the appeal process of their EFC through the Process of Professional Trial or Special Conditions.
- h. Be a U.S. citizen, undocumented or international students, permanent resident, refugees, asylum seekers, beneficiaries of DACA, y DREAMers.
- i. Complete The **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)** Application that is available on the University's website, www.caribbean.edu, in its entirety.

3. Distribution of Funds ARPA

a-ARPA Applications will be evaluated, in the order of receipt thereof.

- ✚ It will be verified that students who have completed the ARPA Application have also completed the 2021-2022 FAFSA, otherwise they will be contacted to assist you in the process of completing it.
- ✚ The *average* assignment to be assigned from ARPA to students from July 2021 through May 2022, will contemplate the following scales of the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and academic load:

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)	Undergraduate Students and Short Careers, 15 credits or more	Undergraduate Students and Short Careers, 12 to 14 credits	Undergraduate Students and Short Careers, 11 credits or less	Graduate Students 6 credits or more	Graduate Students Less than 6 credits
EFC cero (0)	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,200.00	\$1,900.00	\$ 2,200.00	\$1,700.00
EFC \$ 1 a \$5,846	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,900.00	\$1,500.00
EFC greater than \$5,846	\$ 1,600.00	\$1,400.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,000.00
Did not complete FAFSA 2021-2022	\$ 800.00	\$ 700.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 500.00	\$300.00

- Students of the Doctoral Program "Blend Learning" and who were enrolled in the summer term, July 21/BL1, will also be considered for the assignment of this aid Students of the Doctoral Program "Blend Learning" and who were enrolled in the Summer term, July 21/BL1, will also be considered for the assignment of this aid.
 - ✚ The academic load will be determined at the time the student completes the procedure to access the funds and their ARPA application is evaluated.
 - The student who requests a re-evaluation of his original allocation of the ARPA emergency aid, will be granted a second evaluation and if he still maintains an economic need not covered with other economic aid administered by the University and if there are uncommitted funds, he could be considered for an increase of this emergency aid and include it in the next payroll to be processed.

- ✚ The Finance Office will be limited to collecting the debt contracted with the University, to the students who have voluntarily authorized us to collect through their ARPA Application, marking the box of authorization of collections.
- ✚ If the student, after completing and sending us his ARPA Application, and who originally authorized us to collect from his help the existing debt with the University, sends us an email indicating that he needs 100% of these funds to assist them during this pandemic, no type of charge will be made to the student's original assignment. You will be issued a check for the total of the assignment.
- ✚ If after the funds are distributed to students there is a remnant thereof, the University will determine the procedure for the distribution of these funds among eligible students in accordance with the applicable requirements for students under ARPA.

For further questions or additional information, the student should send an email to: COVID19@caribbean.edu. The University will limit itself to answering the emails received through the institutional emails of our students (*please, not personal emails*).

VI-FUNDS ALLOCATED AND PAID TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

Date	Number of Eligible Students & Beneficiaries	CARES	CRRSAA	ARPA
Report as of 30 June 2020	1,750	\$1,033,550.00		
Report as of September 30, 2020	532	\$195,580.00		
Report as of December 22 2020	1,392	\$583,600.00		
Report to 30 March 2021 – Final Report	2,182	\$1,856,988.00		
Report as of 30 June 2021	724		\$ 1,856,988.00	
Report as of 30 September 2021	390			\$1,046,132.00
Total Students eligible for HEERF, 30 SEPTEMBER 2021		2,182	724	390
Total Students who benefited from HEERF I, II, III as of September 30, 2021		2,182	724	390

Report prepared: Thursday 30 September 2021

Elena E. García, Administrator
Student HEERF Funds

<https://www.caribbean.edu/ayuda-de-emergencias-heef/>