



# Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III

## About the American Rescue Plan (ARP) and the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)

On March 11, 2021, the federal government enacted the American Rescue Plan (ARP). ARP includes a third Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF III). A portion of HEERF funds must go directly to eligible students in the form of emergency financial aid grants for expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On May 25, 2021, Union Institute & University was awarded \$540,165.00 in ARP (HEERF III) funding for eligible students. It was determined that there were 355 eligible students.

### Federal Eligibility

- Emergency financial aid grants may be used by students for:
  - any component of their cost of attendance, or
  - emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health care) or child care.

### University Specifics

The following information is provided by Union Institute & University as required by the Department of Education in order to comply with the reporting requirements under ARP.

#### **1. Certification and Agreement**

Because Union Institute & University received funds under CRRSAA, there was no need for signing a new agreement for ARP.

#### **2. Amounts to be Received**

Union Institute & University received \$540,165 in HEERF III Emergency Assistance Grant funds.

#### **3. Amounts Distributed to Date**

As of March 31, 2022, \$102,154.07 were distributed directly to students in the first quarter of 2022, with a total of \$536,165.00 of total funds distributed directly to students since August 31, 2021.

#### **4. Estimated Number of Eligible Students**

The university determined that eligible students were those who had been enrolled in Spring and Summer 2021 (or for Ph.D. students, 2021 B and 2122 A. ARP requires that, as with CARES and CRRSAA, the university “prioritize students with exceptional need.” The university defined “exceptional need” initially as those students who have \$0 Expected Family Contribution (EFC). It was determined that 178 students met those conditions for eligibility. Eligibility was expanded to include 170 more students with EFCs above \$0 in ascending order, ranging from \$40 to \$10,577. A third category of students, special cases, included 7 more students. Six of those students were undergraduates and were eligible for up to \$2,500 each. The seventh student was a Ph.D. student who was eligible for up to \$3,500.

#### **5. Number of Students who have Received HEERF Emergency Grant Funds**

268 students have received HEERF III Emergency Grant Funds as of March 31, 2022.

For the \$0 EFC students received: 172 students received \$335,166.92

For the low EFC students received: 91 students received \$189,498.08

For the special cases students: 5 students received \$11,500

#### **6. Method of Determining Which Students Would Receive HEERF Emergency Grant Funds**

Union Institute & University followed the federal guidelines provided. Financial Aid and Office of Institutional Research have vetted each student to determine who met all criteria. ARP requires that, as with CARES and CRRSAA, the university “prioritize students with exceptional need.” The university defined “exceptional need” initially as those students who have \$0 Expected Family Contribution (EFC). When all the \$0 EFC students had either a) received funds, or b) did not apply for or qualify for funds, then students with higher than \$0 EFC in ascending order were selected for eligibility. Students completed applications and checked off options for eligible expenses. In addition, there was an option to check “Other” and add an explanation. A member of the Office of Student Support Services reviewed the application. If “Other” was selected, the reviewer determined if the explanation was an eligible expense.

#### **7. Instructions, Directions and Guidance Regarding HEERF Emergency Grant Funds**

Union Institute & University developed a simple online application process for students to apply for the Emergency Assistance Grant funds. Students were sent an application with an introduction letter. Only eligible students received the e-mail and application. The application was an e-form and went to a central email box for review by the Office of Student Success.

Approved application for requested funds from eligible students are sent to the Business Office for processing each Monday. Students can expect a direct deposit into their bank account the following Friday.

ARP student payments are non-taxable.