

To: La Roche University Students  
From: Office of the President  
Subject: COVID-19 Update - Emergency Student Aid Grants  
Date: May 4, 2020

Dear Students:

La Roche University is slated to receive approximately \$1.2 million from the **Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)** as part of the \$14 billion in support for postsecondary institutions and their students under the recently passed **Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act**, as announced by the U.S. Department of Education. Of that \$1.2 million, half of the money will be earmarked for emergency financial aid grants for La Roche students.

The University will be awarding grants directly to students to pay for expenses incurred related to COVID-19 disruptions, including, food, housing, course materials and technology, health care and childcare. Our goal is to begin providing this measure of financial relief as quickly as possible to those students who need it the most so that they can continue their studies with peace of mind. As required by the Department of Education, La Roche has submitted a certification form to receive the federal funds, and University leadership has developed a plan for distributing money to students.

These federal dollars will supplement La Roche's ongoing efforts to provide financial relief for students in need of assistance. Since the pandemic began, La Roche has already disbursed thousands of dollars from the Sister Candace Introcaso Student Emergency Fund to more than 25 students who needed financial support for a variety of reasons.

Information is provided below explaining eligibility and how to apply:

### **What students are eligible to receive emergency financial aid grants from the HEERF?**

Only students who are or could be eligible to participate in programs in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, may receive emergency financial aid grants. If a student has filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), then the student has demonstrated eligibility to participate in programs. Students who have not filed a FAFSA but who are eligible to file a FAFSA also may receive emergency financial aid grants. The Financial Aid office will review and verify all applications.

### **Is other emergency financial aid available to students who are not eligible to receive a grant from the HEERF?**

Students who are not eligible to receive a grant from the HEERF should apply to the Sister Candace Introcaso Student Emergency Fund by emailing [elena.almendarez@laroche.edu](mailto:elena.almendarez@laroche.edu) or [colleen.ruefle@laroche.edu](mailto:colleen.ruefle@laroche.edu) and requesting an application.

## **How do I apply for an emergency financial aid grant from the HEERF?**

Apply online at [laroche.edu/CARES](http://laroche.edu/CARES) or click on the [Apply for CARES Aid](#) link located in the left-side menu on the [coronavirus webpage](#) of the La Roche website. Students must complete and submit the online application for consideration of their grant request. Upon receipt of the application, eligibility to receive federal financial aid will be verified and a committee appointed by the president will determine the grant award amount in compliance with the HEERF and available funds.

Students are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible, and the distribution of grants will begin immediately. Since the amount of money that La Roche has been given to distribute to our students in the form of emergency aid is limited, we anticipate the number of requests will exceed the amount of money we have to award. In order to serve as many students as possible, grants will range from \$250 to \$1,300. The committee will consider the following criteria for each applicant when awarding grants:

- Pell eligible students with no Expected Family Contribution will receive highest priority;
- Students with a significant need related to COVID-19 disruptions, including, food, housing, health care and childcare, will receive second highest priority; and
- Other students eligible to receive federal assistance also will be considered for emergency grants.

## **What can be covered by an emergency financial aid grant from the HEERF?**

The CARES Act states that the funds are to be used to provide emergency financial aid grants to students to pay for expenses incurred related to COVID-19 disruptions, including, food, housing, course materials and technology, health care and childcare.

## **How long after applying until I will know if I will receive an emergency financial aid grant from the HEERF? When will I receive the money?**

You will receive an email from [LRUcares@laroche.edu](mailto:LRUcares@laroche.edu) within three to five business days regarding the status of your grant application. Those who receive grants can expect to receive a check issued by La Roche University ordinarily within two weeks of being notified that their application has been accepted. We expect the first group of checks to be mailed out on May 13.

## **Can emergency financial aid grants from the HEERF be directly applied to my outstanding tuition balance?**

No, the CARES Act requires institutions to distribute the money directly to students, who may then choose to pay their outstanding balance with the University.

## **Will an emergency financial aid grant from the HEERF impact my financial aid award from La Roche?**

No, this award is a one-time grant provided directly to students and is not considered part of your financial aid package from La Roche.

## **Is an emergency student aid grant from the HEERF taxable?**

At this time the dollars are taxable, but the Department of Education is currently working with the Internal Revenue Service to make the change so that the grant money will not be taxed. Further information will be forthcoming via the La Roche coronavirus (COVID-19) webpage.

**Who should I contact if I have questions about eligibility and/or the application process?**

Please email [LRUcares@laroche.edu](mailto:LRUcares@laroche.edu) with any questions related to eligibility, the application process or other matters related to the distribution of emergency financial aid grants from the HEERF.

La Roche University is grateful that the Department of Education has committed to disbursing these funds quickly, as we are eager to begin providing a measure of financial aid relief for our students who need it the most.

Blessings,

Sister Candace Introcaso, CDP, Ph.D.  
President