

Statement on the One-Year Anniversary of the American Rescue Plan

March 7, 2022

This week marks one year since the federal government passed the American Rescue Plan, which included the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) through the Department of Education's Office of Postsecondary Education.

Institutions of higher education in New York state, including Niagara University, collectively received \$2.7 billion. In addition to providing direct financial support to students at risk of dropping out, these funds were used by colleges and universities to manage payrolls and other expenses affected by the pandemic, and to ensure the health of campuses by subsidizing the expense of COVID-19 tests, health screenings, and other safety protocols.

At Niagara University, we are returning to a campus of engaged living and learning. We are able to do that because of a number of factors, including the HEERF funding, which allowed us to provide our students with a high-level learning experience, including in-classroom teaching and lab work, engaging university events, the restart of NCAA athletics, and residential life on campus

Thank you to the Department of Education and your advocacy for both public and independent colleges and universities across the country. Thank you, also, to the elected officials who supported this critical funding, including Senator Charles Schumer, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, and Congressman Brian Higgins.