MEMORANDUM

DATE:    May 20, 2020

TO:    All SIPI Students, Staff and Board of Regents Members

FROM:    Dr. Sherry Allison, President

SUBJECT:    COVID-19 Relief Funds for Students

CARES Act-Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) is the third bill Congress enacted this year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on public health, the US economy, small and large businesses, individuals, and state/local governments. Through Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act: Tribal Colleges and Universities, SIPI will receive $593,278.00 of which:

- 50% ($296,639.00) is for “Direct New Emergency Student Aid”. Awards are to be made only for students to use to address expenses related to the disruption of campus operations including, food, housing, course materials, technology and health care, child care and transportation. Disruption must be due to the coronavirus.
- 50% (296,639.00) are “Institutional funds”. To be used by the college to “defray costs associated with COVID-19."

According to guidance from the US Department of Education only students who are or could be eligible, to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended, may receive emergency financial aid grants (HEERF). There is no requirement to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) but having one on file would be the only practicable way to determine that a student is eligible to participate in the Title IV programs and meet all applicable student eligibility requirements. If a student has filed a FAFSA and has been determined Title IV eligible, then the student has demonstrated eligibility to participate in Title IV programs.

We will soon award HEERF student relief funds. To be eligible, a student must be enrolled at SIPI full-time or part time during the 2020 Spring and/or 2020 Summer trimesters and determined Title IV eligible. Students are not eligible if they enrolled exclusively in online courses on/or after March 13, 2020 for 2020 Spring, or withdrew from all classes.

There is no application to be filed; however students must complete and submit a CARES Emergency Funding Questionnaire which will be emailed to the student upon determination of award. Relief checks for eligible students are $1,100.00 for full time and $550.00 for part time. Checks will either be mailed to students at the address contained on the CARES Emergency Funding Questionnaire or deposited electronically for those who have submitted their banking information.
The HEERF funds will be disbursed to students in three groups:

**Group One:** Students enrolled in the 2020 Spring trimester who completed a FAFSA and received a PELL award for 2020 Spring; must be Title IV eligible for the 2020 Spring trimester; must complete and submit the *CARES Emergency Funding Questionnaire*. Financial Aid staff will review and certify eligible Title IV students the week of May 18, 2020 and process payment request by May 26, 2020.

**Group Two:** Students enrolled in the 2020 Spring trimester who have not completed a FAFSA and did not receive a PELL award; must have completed a FAFSA by June 30, 2020; must be Title IV eligible for the 2020 Spring trimester and must complete and submit the *CARES Emergency Funding Questionnaire*. Financial Aid staff will review and certify eligible Title IV students by July 10, 2020 and process request for payment by July 17, 2020.

**Group Three:** Students enrolled in the 2020 Summer trimester must complete and file the FAFSA by June 30, 2020, and be determined eligible for PELL; must complete a FAFSA by June 30, 2020; must be Title IV eligible for the 2020 Summer trimester and must complete and submit the *CARES Emergency Funding Questionnaire*. Financial Aid staff will review and certify eligible Title IV students by July 10, 2020 and process request for payment by July 17, 2020.

If you have questions, please contact either Gloria Mariano at Gloria.Mariano@bie.edu or Mely Mitchell at Melynda.Mitchell@bie.edu. Thank you for choosing SIPI, we will do all we can to help you achieve your academic goals. Please stay in school, stay vigilant and stay safe. Take care and thank you.