

FEMA Obligates Millions for Repairs to Universities in Puerto Rico

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GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico — FEMA has obligated nearly **\$152 million** over the past three years for a total of 116 projects at 15 higher education institutions in Puerto Rico, such as the University of Puerto Rico (UPR), American University and the Pontifical Catholic University, among others. Funding includes **\$47 million** for 21 permanent work projects that will benefit thousands of students around the Island.

“Education is one of the most important and valuable resources that any country can produce. These obligations will help these institutions build stronger as part of their recovery, and most importantly, it’s a solid investment in the future of Puerto Rico,” said Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, Alex Amparo.

To date, the UPR has been awarded **\$130.6 million** for **53** projects to help repair and strengthen the first and largest higher education system in Puerto Rico. For example, the Humacao campus, where around 3,144 students are enrolled, was obligated **\$23.3 million** to restore the buildings that are home to their Social Work, Aviary, Graphic Arts departments, among others. This includes **\$1.5 million** to reinforce the roof as well as weatherproofing to provide a watertight seal to the structures.

“The UPR community is pleased to receive this grant. It represents a step forward in developing our infrastructure, with the well-being of our students and community as our main goal,” said Dr. Aida I. Rodríguez Roig, Chancellor of University of Puerto Rico at Humacao.

Other obligations for the UPR system include funds for the university’s Central Administration and the following campuses: Aguadilla Campus, Arecibo Campus, Bayamón Campus, Carolina Campus, Cayey Campus, Ciencias Médicas Campus, Mayagüez Campus, Ponce Campus, Río Piedras Campus and the Utuado Campus.



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Likewise, the American University of Puerto Rico (AU) was obligated **\$8.8 million** for five permanent work projects that will benefit its 681 students. For its Bayamón Campus, **\$3.7 million** are destined to repair its Eugenio Guerra Sports Complex, replace equipment and other repairs at several buildings. Around **\$700,000** of those funds will be used to strengthen the facilities with projects such as soil stabilization, adding waterproof sealer and other mitigation measures for this institution with 57 years of experience on the Island.

“The economic impact of the grants to our University will be very significant during the difficult times in which we find ourselves. We are very pleased with the collaboration and we hope to have all the projects obligated in the next few weeks,” said the American University’s president, Juan Carlos Nazario-Torres.

Meanwhile, the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, which serves 6,562 students in its Ponce Campus, was obligated around **\$70,000**. This grant will cover expenses for the architectural and engineering design to repair the Sports and Cultural Complex, the institution’s main sports and training venue where graduations, assemblies and other activities are held. For his part, the Vice President of Finance and Administration of this university, Jose A. Frontera Agenjo, expressed that being able to make these repairs guarantees that a complete service can continue to be provided to the university community.

“These institutions generate an impact on both the groups they serve and the communities around them. To the extent that these obligations help to strengthen these structures, they also generate changes in the areas where they are located. Both FEMA and the Government of Puerto Rico will continue to work together to achieve the reconstruction of our Island,” said COR3 Executive Director Ottmar Chavez.

To date, FEMA has obligated over **\$7.3 billion** for costs related to hurricanes Irma and Maria, including projects to help rebuild infrastructure throughout Puerto Rico. Roughly 1,060 local staff are leading the efforts and play a key role in moving recovery forward. Despite unprecedented challenges, our resolve remains undeterred as we continue this banner year of recovery. The Agency is part of the transformation and the revival of the island, a process that is becoming more evident every day and that will benefit the island's residents and its future generations.



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For more information on Puerto Rico's recovery from Hurricane María, visit fema.gov/disaster/4339 and recuperacion.pr. Follow us on our social networks at Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico, Facebook.com/COR3pr and on [Twitter @COR3pr](https://Twitter.com/COR3pr).



San Juan, Puerto Rico (May 19, 2020) – To date, the University of Puerto Rico has been awarded **\$130.6 million** for **53** projects to help repair and strengthen the first and largest higher education system in Puerto Rico. Obligations for the UPR system include funds for the university's Central Administration and eleven campuses.



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