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# Here's Where Hurricane-Displaced College Students Can Get Tuition Breaks in South Florida

By JESSICA BAKEMAN • SEP 28, 2017

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*Miami Dade College is offering in-state tuition rates to Puerto Rican students displaced by Hurricane Maria. The college's Interamerican Campus in Little Havana is shown here.*

PHOTO FROM MIAMI DADE COLLEGE'S FACEBOOK PAGE

Puerto Rican students who were displaced by Hurricane Maria will soon be able to continue their studies in South Florida — at a discount.



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1:04

This week Gov. Rick Scott asked public colleges and universities (<http://www.flgov.com/2017/09/26/gov-scott-florida-stands-ready-to-help-puerto-rico-following-hurricane-maria/>) to offer in-state tuition rates to Puerto Ricans affected by the storm. Many schools responded — and some are going further by extending the offer to people from other places affected by recent natural disasters. And private schools are pitching in, too.

Here's more on what South Florida institutions are doing and how eligible students can take advantage of their offers:

**Miami Dade College:** Per Scott's direction, Miami Dade College will allow Puerto Rican students to enroll with big tuition breaks. In-state rates are about about a third of what students from outside Florida pay.

Students can enroll immediately, Provost Lenore Rodicio said. There's a "mini-term" of face-to-face courses starting Oct. 2. Online classes are an option, too.

Rodicio said the school will work with students to help them access federal financial aid or private scholarships.

To find out more, call 305-237-8888.

**Broward College:** The Fort Lauderdale-based school will also waive out-of-state fees for Puerto Rican students who relocate to Florida.

For more information, call 954-201-7350 or e-mail [bcrecruiting@broward.edu](mailto:bcrecruiting@broward.edu).

**Palm Beach State College:** Further north, Palm Beach State College is providing its out-of-state tuition waivers to a broader swath of students.

In addition to Puerto Rican students affected by Maria, the school will also give discounts to Texans who were displaced by Hurricane Harvey. And the college will consider extending the offer to students from any state, territory or country that has been negatively impacted by a natural disaster.

A spokeswoman said the college is still working out all the details of its plan, and it's unclear when students would be able to enroll.

People can inquire by calling the college information center at 561-967-7222.

**Florida Atlantic University:** The Boca Raton public institution won't heed Scott's call to offer in-state tuition to students displaced by Maria. The school has other plans: Administrators decided to waive 2017-18 out-of-state tuition fees for any current FAU students whose permanent address in Puerto Rico.

"This decision ... will help our affected students deal with the crushing challenges facing them and their families," spokeswoman Lisa Metcalf said in an e-mail.

**St. Thomas University:** Up to 100 Puerto Rican and Caribbean students could get free room and board through spring at St. Thomas University, a Catholic school in Miami Gardens.

Any students in Puerto Rico or Caribbean islands impacted by Hurricanes Irma and Maria are eligible to apply. That includes undergraduate, graduate and law students.

Provost Irma Becerra said more than 50 students have already inquired, and a few have applied. Students can call 356-286-6612.

For Becerra, Puerto Rico's struggle is personal.

"I myself grew up in Puerto Rico. So when we saw the pictures and the coverage by the news media as well as family and friends that reside in the island we knew that we needed to help," she said.

**What about other South Florida colleges?**

Florida International University in Miami hopes to eventually let Puerto Rican students pay in-state tuition rates. But the school is in the middle of the fall semester now, so it likely won't be able to do that until spring.

Some schools have tried to help in other ways. For example, Everglades University's Boca Raton campus is a drop-off site for donations to assist people in Puerto Rico.

*The story has been updated to include new information from Florida Atlantic University. If you have information about other South Florida colleges working to help students affected by the recent storms, e-mail reporter Jessica Bakeman at [jbakeman@wlrnnews.org](mailto:jbakeman@wlrnnews.org).*

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