



April 17, 2020

Dear Students and Parents,

In uncertain and fearful times, I take comfort in reflecting on how generations before us have persevered through their own daunting challenges.

For The University of Scranton, the early months of World War II were, indeed, such a time – a period marked by economic uncertainty, international turmoil and dramatic changes for higher education across the nation.

It was then, in 1942, that Most Rev. William J. Hafey, Bishop of Scranton, invited the Society of Jesus to assume administration of the University. Even today, I am inspired by the response of Very Rev. James P. Sweeney, S.J., then Provincial of the Society of Jesus' Maryland/New York Province, as he accepted Bishop Hafey's invitation:

“...acceptance of your invitation is, of course, a challenge in these abnormal times, when all colleges are facing a crisis. Even the fate of well-established institutions is in the balance and many smaller colleges may be pushed to the wall during the next six months. However, St. Ignatius was never one to run away from a difficult proposition, and we are supposed to imitate his example.”

In 2009, the University established the James P. Sweeney, S.J., Family Outreach Fund when the recession left many students unable to meet tuition payments. Supported by generous gifts from alumni and friends, the fund has remained a beacon of hope, helping Scranton students stay enrolled after encountering unexpected financial hardship.

As we all respond to the coronavirus outbreak, we want to reach out to students and families in the following ways to offer our help and advice to those among you who are responding to serious reductions in family income due to unemployment, underemployment and other losses of income:

- Families in need of assistance should contact the Financial Aid Office at finaid@scranton.edu or (570) 941-7701. The Financial Aid staff will review and verify updated information to determine if any increases can be made to need-based federal, state and University of Scranton financial aid programs. This will include funding that may be possible through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, or the University's Father Sweeney Grant fund. If you have not already done so, families should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at studentaid.gov. Pennsylvania residents should adhere to the PA State Grant deadline of May 15, 2020.

- The University will offer financial counseling to families requesting special assistance to meet their financial educational expenses. Staff from the offices of Financial Aid and the Bursar will work with students and their families on the development of financing plans, which will include a combination of federal student and parent loans and may allow for the development of special payment plans outside of the University's normal payment policy.

While we will not be able to fulfill every request, we will do what we can.

I want you all to know that you remain in my thoughts and prayers – and in those of the entire University of Scranton family – each day.

May God bless and keep you, and may God bless The University of Scranton.

Scott R. Pilarz, S.J.
President