



January 23, 2019

## NOTICE OF DATA BREACH

Dear Student:

We are writing to provide you with information about a data incident involving Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (“KazNU”), the university hosting the American Councils for International Education (“American Councils”) Russian-language programs in Almaty, Kazakhstan. You are receiving this notice because our records indicate that you were a student on a program hosted by KazNU, and therefore may have been affected.

### **What Happened?**

Recently, we became aware that KazNU may have improperly shared certain personal data for students participating in the American Councils’ study-abroad program at KazNU with other students on the same program between 2015 and January 2019.

### **What Information Was Involved?**

More specifically, we believe that KazNU shared some students’ names, places and dates of birth, and passport numbers, issuance and expiration dates with some, but not all, other students on the same program when communicating the issuance of student visitor visas. The shared data does not contain educational, medical or financial data of any sort.

### **What We Are Doing.**

Upon discovery of the unauthorized disclosure of this information, American Councils commenced an internal investigation, and promptly took measures to prevent further dissemination of this data and increase its students’ data security by working with KazNU to update its privacy and communication practices. In addition, the KazNU employee involved in the communications leading to the unauthorized sharing of personal data has been terminated.

### **What You Can Do.**

Given the nature of the information potentially exposed, we suggest that you monitor your accounts. You may also wish to contact the three credit bureaus and place a fraud alert on your accounts. Their contact information is:

- Equifax: Equifax.com or 1-800-525-6285; P.O. Box 105788 Atlanta, GA 30348
- Experian: Experian.com or 1-888-397-3742; P.O. Box 9554 Allen, TX 75013
- TransUnion: Transunion.com or 1-800-680-7289; Fraud Victim Assistance Department

P.O. Box 2000 Chester, PA 19022-2000

You are also entitled to a free credit report every year from each of these agencies at:  
[www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com).

### **Additional Identity Protection Measures.**

We strongly encourage you to remain vigilant with respect to reviewing your account statements and credit reports, and promptly report any suspicious activity or suspected identity theft to us and to the proper law enforcement authorities, including local law enforcement, your state's attorney general and/or the Federal Trade Commission ("FTC"). You may contact the FTC or your state's regulatory authority to obtain additional information about avoiding identity theft. The following provides additional state-specific guidance for states whose residents we believe may have been affected.

#### *FTC*

The FTC's Consumer Response Center handles complaints and inquires related to consumer protection, including identity theft and your rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act ("FCRA"). The FCRA protects the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of consumer reporting agencies. The following contains more information regarding your rights under the FCRA: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/pdf-0096-fair-credit-reporting-act.pdf>.

You may receive additional information concerning fraud alerts and security freezes by contacting the FTC: [www.ftc.gov/idtheft](http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft); 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338); 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20580.

#### *Maryland*

For residents of Maryland, you may also obtain information about preventing and avoiding identity theft from the Maryland Office of the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division: [www.oag.state.md.us](http://www.oag.state.md.us); 1-888-743-0023; 200 St. Paul Place, Baltimore, MD 21202.

#### *North Carolina*

Residents of North Carolina may also obtain information about preventing and avoiding identity theft from the North Carolina Attorney General's Office, Consumer Protection Division: [www.ncdoj.gov](http://www.ncdoj.gov); 1-877-5-NO-SCAM; 9001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-9001.

#### *Oregon*

Residents of Oregon are advised that they may report suspected identity theft to local law enforcement, the FTC, and the Oregon Department of Justice, Consumer Protection Division. The Consumer Protection Division has three ways its residents may submit a complaint: By phone through its Consumer Hotline: 1-877-877-9392; by email: [help@oregonconsumer.gov](mailto:help@oregonconsumer.gov); or through the Division's online portal: <https://justice.oregon.gov/consumercomplaints/>.

We regret the occurrence of this situation. Please be assured that American Councils has taken prompt action to address it, including the implementation of additional steps to ensure the security of our students' personal information and to avoid any future unauthorized disclosure of American Councils' participants' information.

Should you have further questions, you may contact Vladka Shikova at (202) 833-7522 or at the email listed below.

Sincerely,

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