

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

We are living in such a complex time. Our hospital partners are dealing with huge nursing and surgeon layoffs as grocery stores are paying premiums for clerks that deliver curbside orders! Everything is in an imbalance at this time. And all of you are asking the important question, when will this end?

In my readings of Abraham Lincoln, still one of my favorite people to quote, I remember his response to a friend in Chicago when he was a state legislator in New Salem. He wrote, "We generally have in this Sangamon County – Peace, Health, Plenty and No News." As I reflected over the past sunny weekend, I think that is where we are. No amount of worry or fret is going to change the way we look at or to respond to this deadly disease. We are blessed to be a health care university, and our decisions and plans need to be based on science and evidence. Just as we thanked our research faculty last Friday, we need to trust and have confidence in the many health care professionals we educate. I think the strongest antidote to fear is trust. Is that not what we ask our students to do when they are taught and mentored by their faculty? Students trust us that they will receive the science and art of their professions to be effective world-class practitioners.

Let's trust the many medical professionals who are working on the front lines to manage COVID-19. Our local public health officials are studying the trends and outbreaks in great detail. We are fortunate that they are leading us through the difficult days. Today, April 20, 2020 the COVID-19 Response Team met to discuss our upcoming virtual graduations, orientations and the plans for Summer Quarter.

#### COVID-19 Updates

- I am pleased to report that since Friday we have not had one additional faculty, staff or student case reported. We know of one student being tested. Overall I think everyone at Midwestern University has done an excellent job of "flattening the curve" in our campus communities.
- I wish to remind everyone that we are taking unprecedented steps to keep you safe, and all we ask in return is for everyone do their part to wash your hands frequently, use a mask in public areas, and do not congregate in groups. Continue to remain healthy and safe!

#### Student Updates

- Our academic deans and program directors are assisting in collecting graduation photos, class representatives messages to the graduates and printing programs. In the days to come we will let everyone know mailing dates of diplomas and other critical materials for graduation celebrations at home.
- The summer student orientation will be hosted virtually. The Dean of Students, Dr. Ross Kosinski, is preparing details for incoming students. Additionally, we will be collecting pictures of all incoming students to be used for your Student Identification Card. Directions and guidelines will be sent to all incoming students regarding "helpful hints" for a good identification card photo.

As we enter into another week of uncertainty, I hope that all of you can remain positive and identify with the strong message, "Yes, I have peace, health, plenty and no news." To quote another of Abraham Lincoln's famous sayings, "The better part of one's life consists of friendships." As we socially distance ourselves to flatten the curve, may we stay connected with the friendships that enrich our lives. May this Evening's Update find you in good health.

Be well.

Dr. G.