This week the coronavirus pandemic reinforced what we already knew: CMU is both a place and a community. On one hand, perhaps our sense of place has been disrupted by not being physically on campus. On the other hand, our sense of community remains strong as we face a collective challenge together.

Next week CMU students and faculty begin leveraging technology to sustain learning online. The online experience will no doubt result in creativity, innovation, ideas and new approaches to education that will make us better in the future. This transition to online learning has created many questions and inquiries from students, faculty, staff and parents. As a result, the university created new web resources: Students can access this new resource here and faculty resources may be found here.

Distance Education will be open this Saturday and Sunday 8a-5p to assist faculty in final preparations as they transition courses into an online format. Faculty received details on how to contact the Distance Education team this weekend sent earlier today in an email from Tim Pinnow. On a related note, two of our stellar student employees in Distance Education will be helping their fellow Mavericks with tips for online learning. I would like to introduce you to Blair and Edward and encourage you to watch for future videos from them in the coming days.

On Tuesday President Foster communicated the details for spring Commencement, reiterating that the hard work of CMU students will be recognized in this time-honored tradition. Like online classes, Commencement will similarly be adapted using virtual technology. This innovative approach is one of two options for students. Those who desire a more traditional ceremony can opt to participate in a rescheduled Commencement on August 1.

As response to COVID-19 unfolds, the university is working to support childcare needs for essential workers and the community. The Little Mavs Learning Center made 100 slots available to support emergency responders, health workers and essential public service employees. If you know anyone in the community who needs childcare they can visit the LMLC website. CMU staff are also engaged in a campaign to support local restaurants and workers impacted by the pandemic. A local news outlet produced a story about this effort found here.

You may have also have seen that WCCC faculty and students are responding to COVID-19 by sewing over 1,000 face masks for health care partners and producing 150 face shields using 3D printing technology—with more on the way. Additionally, a local reporter joined CMU custodial staff to learn about the new technologies being used by the facilities team to keep us safe.

Although many of our faculty and staff are working remotely, essential university functions are being maintained and protected. As a reminder, CMU personnel deemed “essential” by the state’s health orders, and as a result allowed on campus, will need their MAVcard in order to access facilities. Staff and faculty may remain updated with personnel Q&A from the state; follow-up questions may be directed to CMU Human Resources.

As always, we encourage the campus to stay up to date by visiting the CMU COVID-19 response website. Have a good weekend.

Best,

John Marshall, Vice President for Student Services, Colorado Mesa University