

ADAM HOWELL: OK, well it looks like we're ready to get started. Welcome and thank you everybody for joining us to this staff forum, hosted by the Employee Assembly. My name is Adam Howell I am the chair of the Employee Assembly for the 2019-2020 term as well as the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Representative. And again, thank you all for being here. This is an important venue for a very trying time, and we hope that we're able to facilitate answering a lot of your questions, and hopefully, being able to get a lot of good information out there to our colleagues across campus, wherever you may be-- actually, not just on campus. As you can see, myself and our panelists are broadcasting from our various-- are joining from our various homes as we are mostly all working remotely right now.

So I just have a few very, very brief remarks and then I'll make some introductions. And we'll go into the Q&A period. So first of all, I just wanted to offer my thanks to our incredible staff right now during this time. So many of you are making things work during a difficult situation. This is new for many of us. Several of you are working remotely and doing a wonderful job. And there are also many of our colleagues who are on campus right now in central roles really keeping the lights on and keeping things going. Keeping those students who are forced to stay on campus safe and fed and doing all the critical things that keep the university going. So thank you so much for your dedication and your stewardship, because it is truly appreciated by your colleagues across campus.

I also want to mention and offer my sincere and deep gratitude to President Pollock and the entire senior administrative team. I think that there have been some really incredible and decisive things that have gone on over a very quick period of time as things rapidly evolve. And my impression and my belief is-- and I've noticed this from a lot of other people who said this-- that everything has been done with the utmost regard to the health safety and well-being of the people that make up the Cornell community. And I want to mention that and thank you all, our panelists, President Pollock, and so many others for making those difficult decisions and really being there for all of us in this critical time.

Lastly, I want to specifically call out our colleagues Weill Cornell Medical. They are literally people who are on the frontlines of the most serious public health crisis, really, in the last century. They are saving lives. They are coming to work every day and doing incredible work. And I hope that we have, at least from the Employee Assembly standpoint, the opportunity to do some things in the future to specifically recognize their incredible efforts. But in this forum, I just wanted to say thank you so much for all you are doing. Your work is truly appreciated and it is having an incredible impact at really, what is the epicenter of this pandemic.

So with that, I won't speak too long. We're here to get information out, and get questions answered. So I would like to introduce our panelists. First of all, I'd like to introduce a few people with the Employee Assembly who will be helping us out. Hei Hei Depew, our executive vice chair and Kristie Mahoney, who is our employee welfare committee chair.

They will be helping us out fielding questions for our panelists. And our panelists are Joel Malina, Vice President for University Relations. Ryan Lombardi, Vice President for Student and Campus Life. Rick Burgess, Vice President for Facilities and Campus Services. We have Anne Jones, Director of Medical Services for Cornell Health. Frank Cantone, Director of the Office of Emergency Management. And of course, Mary Opperman, Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer.

Thank you all so much for making the time to be here and getting good information out to our staff. We truly appreciate it. So with that, I will just turn it over to you, Mary, and let you make some remarks. And then we'll get into questions. So [INAUDIBLE].

MARY OPPERMAN: Thank you so much, Adam. And a special thank you to the Employee Assembly. They have been from the beginning and actively engaged in helping us connect with you, and bring information to you, and they will continue to do so. So special thanks to Adam and all of the Employee Assembly. And a thank you and welcome to all of you who are joining. I'm not going to repeat a lot of what Adam said, but we appreciate so much what you continue to do, whether you're working remotely or you're here on campus and the essential functions that are serving our essential needs. We want to thank you all very much.

I want to add quickly my thanks and gratitude to our health care colleagues at Weill Cornell Medicine. As Adam said, they are really on the frontlines. And for all of us who are watching on the news, we know that they are dealing with really challenging, challenging circumstances, but they have continued, as they always do, to put the health and well-being of their community, of our community at the forefront. And I know many of us are wanting to them to know how much we appreciate them and how much we support them. And later, I hope you'll hear about some of the amazing things that are happening here in the Ithaca campus to help them.

Thanks to my many colleagues who are heads down dealing with this health crisis. You've heard about our panelists. I'm just going to call out Dr. Ann Jones. Dr. Jones has been right in the center of this issue helping educate all of us, helping deal with the students. It is very hard for her to find any time in her very long day. And so I just want to take a moment to thank her for spending some time with us. And I know we'll all learn from her a great deal.

Thanks, also, to Frank Cantone, because he does a lot of the work that you all don't see organizing and developing the responses in an ever changing environment. And I've worked with Frank for a long time. He is a person of calm. He's like a duck. And so he's paddling furiously, but you don't see it. And I just want to thank him so much. And of course, my very good friends and colleagues, Rick, Ryan, and Joel, who are just amazing to work with, as is the whole leadership team. So just a quick thank you to all of them.

So before we get to your questions, just a few comments. First of all, I know this is challenging. Whether you're working on campus, you're working remotely, you're trying to figure out how to get your work done remotely-- these are just challenging times. They're challenging in terms

of your role as an employee. And they're challenging for all of us as part of a community that's very used to getting together-- whether that's your family, however you define it, your friends circle. This whole idea of not being able to do what we know how to do is very stress-producing. And so I want to acknowledge that and let you know that we all feel it in different ways. But I appreciate it.

And so please take care of yourself and one another. Look for the bright spots. If you watch TV or read, you'll see that people all across the world, really, are doing incredible things during this time. I find those such highlights. They fill my heart with a sense of pride and gratitude. And they're very sustaining for me. So look for the bright spots.

Try not to spin. I think it's very hard not to spin in these kinds of times, but try not to. And I'll tell you a personal story. So yesterday, I was spinning a little. I was getting ahead of myself and getting myself all worked up. And President Pollock called me and said, how are you? I'm a little worried. What have you done for yourself today? And she checked in a couple of times and said the things that I always say to all of you-- look at the things that are right in front of you. Address what you can. Control what you can control. Get rest. Be well. And breathe. And it made a huge difference, so I'm going to say the same thing back to all of you.

So now we're going to do our best to answer your questions. I have many more much smarter people with me, so we'll do the very best we can. But please know that you're probably going to ask questions we don't really have answers to. Ask them anyway we'll do the very best we can to get to them. And I know, as all of you have heard, we will get through this. We'll get past this as a world, as a country, and as a campus. So have faith and with that, I'm going to turn it back to, I think, Adam or Hei Hei. And we'll get on with your questions. Thank you, Adam.

ADAM HOWELL: Thanks, Mary. just a couple of things that I forgot to mention. Please ask your questions using the Q&A function in the bottom bar, not the chat function. That's where we'll be taking the questions from. And just to just to piggyback off of what Mary said, we know that there are going to be lots of people on this. And many of you have multiple questions. So we'll try to get to as many as we can today, but we probably almost certainly will not get to them all. But we hope that we'll get good information out there nonetheless. So with that, I will turn it over to you Hei Hei and we'll go into questions.

HEI DEPEW: Hey, everyone. Welcome. Just housekeeping - if you want to submit a question, please do so on the bottom under Q&A. Please do not submit it in the chat so that we can have all of this in one place. I do see some questions coming into the chat.

So question number one. For those who are working on essential tasks and making the hard decisions-- I'm thinking facilities, CRT, HR, executives, but I'm sure others are we making sure that they are getting some time off to rest and recharge. We are all relying heavily on them. But we also want to make sure that they don't burn out and have stressed immune systems during this time.

MARY OPPERMAN: So I'm going to start, but I'll ask my colleagues to join in. So recognizing that each of us touches many. I will say it's important for-- and I know this is happening, by the way, for the leaders of the areas to remind people of exactly that. So just like on President Pollock reminded me yesterday, I think each of us are in contact with our folks, checking in with them, making sure that they are taking time, getting out, breathing-- it's always a good thing.

But I appreciate so much your concern for people, because there are certain central areas that are getting called out quite a bit right now. So I appreciate that. I don't know if any of my colleagues want to join in.

JOEL MALINA: I'll just echo what Mary said. And it's really important as unit leaders that we are emphasizing for all of our team members that wellness is not just something that we say and move on. Wellness needs to be a daily check-in for all of us, with our direct reports for all of their direct reports. And trying to lead by example. I'm making time each day to go out for a walk practicing all-important social distancing. I'm finding even if it's just a few moments to put down my iPhone and close my eyes. I've learned to meditate-- something that I've always resisted, but it's come in quite handy these last few days.

But I do, again, recognize it needs to be an area of constant reassurance. We understand that our team members, all of our employees want to be doing the right thing, but it can't be at the expense of our peace of mind and well-being.

RICK BURGESS: This is Rick. Let me just jump in with respect to the on campus aspect of it. Our plan is that we would rotate those personnel that are providing essential services. So it's really a subset at any given moment. And our plan is to swap them out. With respect to the people that are working from home-- it's a challenge. Everybody's routine has been thrown into disarray. I know mine has. I haven't really gotten back to it yet. I'm not exercising as much as I'm used to, and that pays off when you can't exercise. So it's a challenge for each of us as leaders. And we need to make sure we're reaching out to people.

And so it doesn't have to just be supervisory top down. I would encourage everybody on the line to reach out to your colleagues and just check in with them. Doesn't have to be every day, but just drop on a line and see how they're doing is greatly appreciated.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you, Rick. So there is a question that came in specifically for you. Will guidelines be forthcoming for building coordinators regarding what is expected, allowed during the COVID-19 remote work period?

RICK BURGESS: Yeah, I'm actually drafting up something I want to send out to college officers today. And I'm going to copy and send that out to facility directors. I personally don't have all the building coordinators, but I know folks in my organization do, so I'll make sure this gets out to them.

We're trying to narrow that down, recognizing that there's some things that I have visibility on a knowledge of. I don't know, for instance, where every building coordinator, who they still have that is still in their buildings trying to finish up with teaching preps or critical research. So in terms of broad expectations, we need people to pay attention to security. So we are locking things up. We've put out some information regarding limited steam load shed that's going to happen starting tomorrow. So that'll save us some energy. So building coordinators should have gotten that communication.

We've also asked them to advise us if they have faculty that are done in labs that they'd let us know and request that we decommission fume hoods. That saves us additional energy in that regard. And then if there are specific individual concerns about, for instance, we got a service calls yesterday about door locks that we wanted to get a locksmith in. So we have a locksmith in today addressing some doors that are normally open. Building coordinators wanted them to be closed and locked, and there was a problem with the locks. So we can call people in as necessary to do those things and address individual circumstances.

And then the last thing is we are to get out some revised information regarding mail delivery. That has been very disrupted with people closing up buildings and offices. So I'll leave the details for the communication. But I intend to put that out today. And I hope that covers most of it. If there are other things, I'm happy to answer those.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. What advice or message would Cornell health or the administration like to give to essential staff who are coming to campus to work to ensure their self safety and well-being?

RYAN LOMBARDI: So I will start with that and then ask my colleague Anne, Dr. Jones, to jump in with some of the health advice if that's OK, Anne. First, I will just say to all of those of you who are still coming on to campus to support our students, a very hearty thank you as Mary and others, Adam, suggested. Not all of our students were able to leave. Not all of our students could get home or had a home. And so Ithaca and our campus is their home. And so we really appreciate your continuing to serve them and support them while they're here.

It's very important to us while you're doing that to do all we can to support your health and Safety at the same time. And so we have asked supervisors in the units, the essential units, to put practices in place to support social distancing, to make sure lines of communication are open, and do all that we can to support your health and safety while we're supporting our remaining students. I would just add one last thing before I ask Dr. Jones, Anne, to share a few things. And that's just that if you have specific concerns in your work area that you feel aren't being addressed in this capacity or are specific to your work area, to please let us know, let your supervisor know so that we can make any necessary adjustments.

ANNE JONES: Yeah. And I would add from the health point of view that what we know about this virus to date is that it's spread via respiratory

droplets. We know that there are many reports out there with question about any other forms of transmission and that research is emerging. And officials at the states and the national level and international level are learning more every day. But at present, what we know is that the transmission is respiratory droplets, which means that it is transmitted - if a person is ill with the infection, with being exposed to the respiratory droplets themselves. And that is most likely to happen when you're within six feet of another individual.

This is why the social distancing measures are extremely important. It's up to all of us to make sure that we're maintaining that distance between each other. I heard a great description that social distancing is as important as mutual distancing. We all need to help each other keep those boundaries so that we're maintaining that distance and keeping each other and ourselves safe. Another way that it spreads is if those respiratory droplets, if someone is coughed on or sneezed on. And so that's why that distance is really important.

In terms of maintaining protection, if you're at work or at the front lines, that's where the personal protective equipment is important. In every single area, I know there's been detailed work and analysis of everyone's job of functioning to make sure that they have the appropriate PPE for the job that they're doing. We at Cornell Health are using full PPE that is recommended by CDC for health care workers. But every area has those specifications. And it is important to turn to your supervisors, as has been said, to make sure that the appropriate protection is used for the work that you're doing.

But in general, it's that social distancing and remembering to wash your hands, avoid touching your face, and taking care of yourself in all those ways.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you.

RICK BURGESS: This is Rick. Let me just jump in real quick in terms of physical safety. The campus is pretty empty and there have been a couple of people expressing concerns about is it safe. CUPD is out on the job. They have a full strength shift. We're now bringing on this week, the police auxiliary, which will add seven more personnel to keep an eye on things. I encourage everybody, if you have the Rave app, pull it up, and get familiar with it. If you don't have it, download that. That's a quick way to get a hold of CUPD.

And if you do come to campus, just keep your eyes and ears open. We are concerned about the potential for theft and loss during this time when there are few people on campus. So if something doesn't look right, please let CUPD know, and we have got our standard 24/7 shifts that are out and about on campus. Thanks.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. What will trigger a review by Cornell to allow people to return to their workplaces?

MARY OPPERMAN: So I'll start, and then and then maybe I can turn this over to Joel. This is a very common question that we're getting. And it's

actually coming through the whole country. People want to get back to normal. This is a very hard time. But I also think people recognize that we don't want to do that in such a way that we actually create more health crises and make it last longer or being worse. And so with that, I'm just going to turn it over to Joel, because I know he's been working with the state.

JOEL MALINA: Yeah, thank you, Mary. And I echo what no doubt all of us are thinking about, which is, BOY how great will it be when we can look back on this. And I am really excited for us to get to that point. But the reality is we just don't yet know. We recognize that the progression of the in New York state depends a lot on how well everyone adheres to the social distancing guidelines. We will not be in a position to make any decisions on that separate from where Governor Cuomo and perhaps federal authorities, public health experts direct us.

But needless to say, the governor is very focused first on public safety and public health, but he is-- not that I've spoken to him-- but I'm pretty sure that he would echo all of our desires to be able to return to normalcy and to get back to the business of the state as soon as possible.

So we're tracking it. My office in Albany is a very focused and in communication with senior members of the Cuomo administration. We have a number of really smart dedicated people across the state that want us to get to that point as well, but we're going to do it in a coordinated and public health first focus.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Some staff have prior health care backgrounds licensure. With Governor Cuomo's call to recruit prior health care staff, can you speak to what options staff at Cornell with these types of backgrounds may have?

MARY OPPERMAN: Anne, I don't know if you're in a position to speak to this, but I do know what it reflects is this sense that people have that they want to help. And so this is something that I think it just illustrates that the compassion and generosity of our community. So I'm not sure if you could speak to it specifically, but maybe you can react?

ANNE JONES: Sure. Yes, I saw that notice coming out and very much agree that it reflects this community effort and a public health effort to help each other in this community. I think that one thing-- one of the truths that we've seen as we've been navigating this pandemic together is that everyone has needed to be a little bit flexible. And figure and realize that maybe what we normally do in our work every day needs to shift just a little bit to accommodate the needs of the community, especially within health care needs. And that every health care professional is thinking about that as we're coming to work. Whether it is seeing individuals for in-person care or thinking about providing care remotely.

And so I would say from the health care industry point of view, there is an effort at trying to figure out who can help and where they can help. And whether that is in different places in the health care community. I think that I would say if anyone does feel that they can help and have

the capacity to help, that's wonderful, and would be a wonderful thing to share and speak with your teams about-- thinking about how to help.

JOEL MALINA: And if I can jump in here Hei Hei and Adam, it's an extension of the question, which is what about for non-health professionals, what can we as individuals, as concerned members of our Tompkins County Community do. And Mary referenced this earlier-- it is incredible to see the outpouring of compassion, empathy, and actual dedication of time and effort to trying to help our community. I just want to briefly mention a few of these examples.

There is an effort underway right now in Bartels Hall that Cayuga Medical Center in conjunction with Ryan's team and student and Campus Life is undertaking in terms of actually having sewing stations, where individuals, even without sewing training, can go and helped to create these much needed supplies, both for utilization here in our community, for us to get down to New York City for their needs.

There is a great effort that, again, Ryan's team in Cornell dining has undertaken with the Food Bank of the Southern Tier. A number of our food pantries in our neighborhood are not able to operate. And so SCL Cornell dining employees are essentially collecting all of the food supplies, putting together family packets, and delivering them down to GIAC, the Greater Ithaca Activities Center.

There is wonderful outpouring of student access funds. SA and GPSA need to be commended for the \$270,000 that have been made available to help our students. I could go on and on. Suffice it to say, if you're interested, Frank, I'm going to suggest you as a contact along with Mary. We can be sure to take advantage of those of you with the ability and the inclination to help.

RICK BURGESS: And let me just add to that one as the outgoing co-chair for the United Way campaign. United Way of Tompkins County is accepting donations. You can specifically designate them for COVID-19 relief. And I encourage you to go to the United Way Tompkins County web site you UWTC.org.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. We have heard various reports about whether or not we can get into a campus building to pick something up. Can you provide clarity?

RICK BURGESS: Yeah, let me take that one. I would just say, first off, we really want to abide by the governor's guidance, all right? So the governor's directed that we go to 100% remote. So I would say first off, this should be only in the most mission essential needs. That should be coordinated with the person supervisor. Make sure that you have your Cornell ID card. As I mentioned, we have police out there doing property checks and so we don't want to come across somebody who can't vouch for themselves and establish that they are actually on the Cornell staff. And please do it during working hours.

So that's kind of Rick's advice. And I think we can abide by the spirit of that. What we really don't want is these folks going in all at once

and not abiding by the social distance. And we really do need to stay out of these workspaces. But I know in some cases, you know, we left in a bit of a rush, and maybe realized that you don't have something, you need a file, whatever.

And then one last thing on that. I know some folks in my organization are having a hard time with bandwidth-- just the size of the drawings and documents they need to work with. Dave Lifka from central IT advise that you can get a pretty good signal even outside of buildings. And so you may be able to bring your car up, park in a parking lot nearby a building that's got Wi-Fi, and successfully get sufficient bandwidth if it's not a physical object that you need to retrieve. I hope that answers your question.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Many of us Cornell employees also have loved ones working in the essential industries, particularly as contractors, subcontractors, who are also on the front lines, and may have been having a difficult time obtaining PPE. What, if anything, is the Cornell community doing to assist them in remaining safe protected well they must continue working?

RICK BURGESS: I guess I'll take that one, too. I'm not aware of any requests that have come to us from contractors for PPE. So if there are, I will inquire with my folks. We have asked contractors to follow safe hygiene practices. We've suspended all in-person job site meetings. We've asked them to do all the things that we're doing with our own folks. So if there is a need for PPE that a contractor or subcontractor has and they can't get it, we can take a look at it and see if we can assist. To my knowledge, that has not come up today, but I'm going to specifically ask my team about that.

FRANK CANTONE: So I'll just add to that. Our Office of Emergency Management is working directly with Tompkins County, emergency operations center there. And they are fulfilling requests and needs from everywhere in the county, including the hospital, other medical providers, EMS operations. And so I don't know if they would be able to fulfill those particular needs, but that would be the outlet that people should go through if there are requests.

JOEL MALINA: And if I could just note again, just because it's such an inspiring effort, I know of two academic units that are utilizing their 3D printing facilities to actually create some of these PPEs that can then be used for those most in need of them. Again, the more of these inspirational stories that we can collect and discuss with our community, I think it will provide some inspiration perhaps to help address this critical need.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. In regards to housing and dining refunds, who can we get a definitive answer from to share with students? Parents and families are continuing to reach out with their anger and frustration.

RYAN LOMBARDI: I'll be happy to address that one. We are working feverishly to get some clear some clarity to our students and their families on those rebates. What I stated now about a week and a half or

so ago still stands. We're going to offer those. I know everyone can appreciate that the team has just been inundated trying to make their way through the logistics of getting our students out and safely on their way. But our financial team is working actively with the university to try to get some clarity on when we can definitively put those forward. So working as fast as we can. We appreciate everyone's patients and grace. I've also fielded a large number of calls and queries from parents myself about this and have continued to tell them it's in the works. We're doing the best we can. We'll get it out as soon as we can.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Does Cornell leadership anticipate any layoffs during this period?

MARY OPPERMAN: So it's a question I'm getting a lot of, and I am going to say the same thing I said when I was asked the last time. Right now, we're focusing on what we have in front of us. What we have in front of us is pretty significant. We are trying to understand the impacts, the financial impacts that this health crisis will create. And until we know more, we are doing everything we can to safeguard the meaningful work of our staff populations. And to say more than that now would simply be inappropriate, because we aren't there yet. We are really looking at the things in front of us and addressing them.

I recognize and I want to acknowledge the concern that causes people to ask that question, and let you know that we're trying our very best to understand what the implications of this will be. And when we know, it will be out to people as soon as possible. But until then, we have been very consistently supportive of our workforce and we're going to continue to do that.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Will important campus infrastructure construction continuous scheduled or even sooner? Seems like a great time to get work done while our population is down. Many construction workers in some trade areas have been laid off laid off all winter and are eager to get to work.

RICK BURGESS: Yeah, this is Rick. We're keeping a role in the construction project we have. I would love to get more work done. I think, you know, to Mary's remark just now on financial impact, we're kind of trying to play this thing smart so we don't spend a whole lot on capital that we might later regret. But I totally agree-- this is a great time to get work done, provided we can do it with social distance, and do it safely for the individuals involved.

So we are in the process of evaluating everything that we have in the work queue right now. And we'll be making some decisions-- whether we proceed or whether we defer-- project by project.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you when making decisions regarding summer programs, will decisions be made as a whole university or can each program decide what can happen if the campus is open?

JOEL MALINA: I'll take a stab at that. I mean, these are discussions that are beginning to be held. The reality is a number of the programs, at

least in the early part of the summer, we don't have the luxury of waiting a long time. I think the answer to your question is that decision, should it be made, would be a central leadership decision that would apply broadly across the university.

RYAN LOMBARDI: That's right. I would just second that, Joel-- that folks can expect a decision on that to give clarity for all those folks doing important work in the summer.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. This is a question that we received in the first COVID forum. How many students remain in Ithaca on and off? And how many are those with an exemption being housed and where?

RYAN LOMBARDI: So we don't have the benefit of knowing how many students stayed with us off campus. We don't know that information. They are renting private rentals throughout the city, in the town and the villages that surround. So we aren't benefiting from hard data on that. Anecdotally, what I'm hearing is that very few students have chosen to remain now. I think that is gradually weighing down, especially in the off campus space over the last week or so. I think initially, and many of you have probably heard this, a number of students indicated they were planning to stay, and hang out in Ithaca, and do this. And we even saw that a little bit in the community. But as this has progressed and as number of states have taken stronger action, I think that that number of students remaining in Ithaca off campus has waned.

As far as on campus, we did make exceptions for students, who, as I mentioned before, aren't able to get home, don't have a suitable home environment to go back to. Those numbers are still sifting out a little bit, because we gave students until this coming weekend to finalize that. But we do think will end up in a little over 3% of the undergraduate population remaining in residence halls on campus.

Right now, those students are where they were. So in fact, the residence halls are not very dense at all right now. They're spread all around campus, just depending on where they were living at the time. We have no immediate plans to do any kind of mass consolidation. We think there's some benefit to, in large part, keeping most of them where they are to promote the aforementioned social distancing that's regularly talked about, and I'm sure Anne appreciates. That we may have to do some shuffling around, but we at this point don't have any mass consolidation plans.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. I am wondering if the university has any plans to encourage people to self-disclose if they have the coronavirus. I know that it is a stretch for individuals, but given HIPAA, what else do we have? If it became socially acceptable and people were supportive, it might help us.

JOEL MALINA: Let me start, and then if I may, Anne, it may be something you could address. I mean, we as a university need to be very cognizant of privacy rules. We also need to be cognizant of the primary role that the Tompkins County Health Department has and for those of our staff who live in other counties, their respective public health departments. So

given all that, there are limitations as to what Cornell can or should be doing. Anne.

ANNE JONES: Yes. And I've also heard this question and have been a part of discussions around the question that I think is underlying questions like this, which is, how do we know whether the community is safe if we know that there are positive cases? And what steps are being taken to ensure that the appropriate contact investigations are being done? And how do we know if I, myself, or if an individual should be concerned.

And I think that those are very important questions, because in this pandemic situation, as we've been saying this hour, this is a community effort to get through together. And those anxieties and concerns are valid. Also, I can speak from experience that we have had close partnership with the Tompkins County Health Department and the New York State Health Department. And very careful and meticulous contact tracings are done in each and every case.

Those involve several components to ensure that every single person who might have been exposed to a positive case is then identified, and given instructions, and protections to ensure that they and their families are safe. That's done with interviews with the individuals themselves who are tested positive. And then reviews that are done, especially with the health care facilities that were involved in caring for them. And we review the tracings to ensure that we have at every single point, every person who may have been exposed then identified. And the Tompkins County Health Department and conducts careful interviews with each of those individuals to then assess their risk using CDC criteria to determine what level of risk someone may be and what kinds of efforts like quarantine or testing or isolation may be appropriate.

In addition, the Tompkins County Health Department will follow normal public health practice, which is that if an individual is known to have been in a public setting and have had a situation where individuals would have been at risk but may not know their names, those sorts of steps are taken. Sometimes, what that means is specific outreach to the areas-- sometimes, what it means is a public listing of places where an individual was so that community members can come forward and identify themselves to the Tompkins County Health Department. All of those steps are being taken to ensure that community members are identified. And I think that I would give hopefully, some reassurance that the community is being taken care of by those public health measures.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Is it up to individual units or Cornell Central Services to provide sanitizing spray wipes for a day to day use by essential employees who are reporting to work on campus? What do we do if our units can't source those supplies?

RICK BURGESS: I guess I'll take a crack at that one. I don't see anybody else leaping forward. That has been the approach-- is that units are responsible for that. I know we're running into some backordering situations on materials. I would say if you have specific needs that you can identify to the IMT-- and Frank can help you get to the closest number on there-- we can look at sharing resources.

MARY OPPERMAN: I was just going to add. I think if you are on campus in an essential role and you don't feel that you have the safeguards that you need, you should first start by elevating that through your leadership team. If you don't feel like you're getting what you need, then let us know. Either go up through your channels, let me know, let someone know so that we can respond. It's a difficult time and there's a lot of moving parts. And so everything may not be where we need it exactly when we need it. But if we find out, the intention is to safeguard everyone.

I think I feel very confident in saying that I believe the Cornell community realizes that we all have the best interests of everyone in our community at heart. So if something isn't quite right, it isn't because it's of any intention. It's because we may have missed something. So tell us and that's how we can respond.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. We currently see 18 confirmed COVID-19 cases in Tompkins County. Can you speak to the impact on the Cornell University community?

JOEL MALINA: Let me address that. And it's a chance to again to make sure all of you are aware of our coronavirus website accessible from the main what we call the panel space on Cornell.edu, which is continually updated with a lot of really important information. I should say that as we hear from more with specific questions, we are trying to utilize our growing FAQ to make sure that the questions we hear most about, we're able to provide answers in a timely fashion.

One of the things that you'll note that the bottom of that web site is specifically, I'll call it a tally of positive confirmed cases in our Ithaca campus community. That is a number that we continually update. It is certainly not going to go into great detail in terms of identifying. But we do recognize that it's top of mind for all of us to really get a sense about the extent that this virus has reached our campus community.

Needless to say, we feel fortunate, certainly, compared to our friends and colleagues in New York City. We are grateful that our numbers in the county are where they are, but that isn't to say that we all have a role in ensuring that that number doesn't get too high.

MARY OPPERMAN: So I don't want to get over my skis, so I'm going to say something and then Dr. Jones is going to correct me if I'm wrong. But one of the things I think for us to be proud of is the fact that our state, frankly, and our community has been active in testing. And so when you test, you're going to find more positive cases. And so, again, I don't want to get over my skis. I'm actually going to ask Anne if she can just speak to that.

ANNE JONES: Sure. Yes, and absolutely agreed that the goal here is to discover if there is community spread. And the way we do that is by testing our community. And when we test more, we will be finding more. And that is where the public health infrastructure and approach becomes vitally important. Because as we find more and the Tompkins County Health

Department conducts the contact tracings, we begin to learn more about exactly how the virus is spreading, how quickly it's spreading, and in what ways we can modify and adapt our knowledge about the virus. And that the public health community can do so in conjunction with the scientific community, who is doing research on this virus all the time, 24/7. To learn as much as possible to then give back to the treatment of our community.

What we've seen in the last few weeks is a changing criteria on a weekly basis, sometimes even on an every few day basis. That has widened and expanded the criteria for testing in such a way that we can capture and learn more about this virus over time. And we in the health care industry, both at Cornell health, and in our partners, and the medical community, and in the state, and across the nation has been actively adopting the new protocols as they come out. So that we can learn more about the virus.

JOEL MALINA: And if I can just add, it's a chance to also call out the really impressive planning and preparations that are being led not just by the health department here in Tompkins County, but by Cayuga Medical Center. I want to throw into the mix as well the amazing efforts that Frank Cantone, who is here on our virtual meeting that he's been spearheading, to make sure that Cayuga Medical Center is getting from Cornell and from our campus community some much needed equipment so that we're ready should the county-wide cases get to a far higher number. So amazing examples of public service, of leadership in all corners of our greater community.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. As we learn more about COVID-19 and things change, could there be any further adjustments to HAP that would provide more support to staff who cannot work remotely? When will Cornell know and be able to share information about folks who might have to be furloughed?

MARY OPPERMAN: Understandable question. So at the risk of sounding like a broken record, right now, with only a few exceptions, we have been able to keep people on pay. It is a reasonable and understandable question that people have about how long we can do that if they are not working. And so we are looking at our situation right now with the best interests of our community in mind. And when we have something that we are ready to share, we will absolutely share it. But I appreciate the question.

We did add the 10 half days. I think those have been helpful to people. I recognize that it doesn't in every case go all the way, but that's why we have been slow to change anything that will have an impact on the broader workforce community. And we will stay in touch with you as we learn more.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. How can staff help to support students who are not on campus with the broad support and resources available to them at home? Are there new digital opportunities to volunteer for those of us who may not work in student services who may wish to help?

RYAN LOMBARDI: Thanks for that question. I appreciate everyone's willingness to help and support our students from afar as well as those

that are here. Our team has put together some virtual programming resource tips. I can get that link out and distributed in one of our subsequent messages. And so to the extent that your work or your unit might be able to offer something to our student population virtually, that would be wonderful. And I would encourage folks to think very creatively and work with the teams that surround you-- your supervisors, your colleagues-- to think about how you might translate the work you do into supporting students at a distance if it is students supporting in student service type work.

So please continue to do that. We put a good web site out on the Dean of Students Office page with some tips. We are going to start collecting information and sharing that as much as possible. Some of the more obvious places have started this, and I can't thank them enough. I know that our fitness center did a virtual some kind of fitness thing. I don't, unfortunately, do a lot of fitness, but did something online, and had hundreds of participants with a fitness instructor in their living room leading a session online. So there's great ways that we can engage our students near and far.

JOEL MALINA: I'll also just add many of us and my division included have a number of student employees, and we're doing all we can, especially for those who have federal work study requirements, to maintain as robust an employment space for them as possible. And I think it's important we continue to make those efforts.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. I'm getting a lot of comments-- people submitting their appreciation for this forum and the opportunity to engage, so I wanted to put that out there. Another question that we've received. For essential staff, will they get any kind of additional compensation for coming to work as there are staff that are getting paid to stay home while others are putting themselves at risk by coming in?

MARY OPPERMAN: So thank you for the question. We've received that before. And I understand the sentiment behind it. What I would say is that right now, what I am most gratified by is the community focus of our staff and faculty on all people. So I think there is a great awareness on the part of the entire workforce that we are going through something we've never been through before. And I'm just so appreciative of the generosity of spirit that we've seen across this whole campus. We will look at all aspects of how we move forward together. And as soon as we have something to share, of course, we will. But my real message is to thank everyone for the fact that just the outpouring of generosity and support for one another has been overwhelming.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. What other recommendation do you have for technical staff whose primary and vital roles are firmly rooted on campus? They can't perform their primary tasks remotely. They want to feel like they're making a contribution to be part of the university and have some comfort knowing their roles remain paramount during this challenging time. I've recommended remote training personal development as well. It could be challenging to pursue this activity 39 hours a week for say, two months. Are there other avenues to explore?

MARY OPPERMAN: Yes, so this is a great question. And when we began, we were hoping that we would get a sense of what the projects that needed additional help were. And we still are hoping that that will be the case. What we're finding is that the best way to be sure that you are continuing to contribute in a way that makes you feel good and proud is to ask your supervisor and let them know that you have capacity to be of assistance. And then move that up the chain until you can find something that you can do that's not going to work in every single case, but it is working in many cases. And they just want to step back and say, I understand that two things are going on there.

One is really, the desire to make sure people know that you want to contribute and that you want to be a valuable member during this changing time. And also, underlying it is a fear that you may be not fully occupied and therefore, vulnerable. We understand that. We also know that those who are not fully occupied-- that's not your fault. That's not happening because of anything you did. This is the time we're in. And we are evolving our understanding about how to move forward. And we're evolving that together. So if you've got some time and you want to contribute, please let your supervisor know. Move it up the chain and we'll do the best we can with that.

RICK BURGESS: Yeah, this is Rick. We already have the little the gig advertisements that we've been working on for the better part of the last year. So everybody's been in the thick of it for now, but as things settle down and we sort out how long this is going to go on, that may be an opportunity for people who have projects that could be done remotely to let others know about.

MARY OPPERMAN: Thank you, Rick. I should have said that. So thank you very much for the aid. We're getting there. We were farther along in doing that when we were at a 50% work remotely. And then we got a little step backwards and we got to 75%. And another step backwards and we got to 100%. But we do have people in HR that are working on that. So thank you, Rick.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. How many exemptions are being made for faculty and staff to return for instruction?

JOEL MALINA: Let me take a stab at it. I am, along with some of my colleagues, participating in the very regular meetings that the provost convenes with all of our deans. Similar to what we've talked about in terms of staff desires to go back to campus, we are trying to minimize the exemptions for faculty while recognizing that some exemption are absolutely critical, especially for those members of our faculty who don't have access to internet at home.

So those exemptions must be granted by a dean with consultation with the provost. I don't have specific numbers except to say that all are approaching this with the proper level of seriousness while recognizing we need to have a successful virtual instruction.

HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Are we monitoring the changes we are making in how we work, teach, and learn to identify best practices in order to make our

work and learning more flexible to situations like this? If possible, can you provide an example of one thing that we might consider adopting in order to make life less disruptive to the educational experience in the future?

ADAM HOWELL: And just to end cap that, I think that I'll have to be our last question, because we're at 1:00.

MARY OPPERMAN: So I'm going to I'm going to take a stab at this to say that's a huge question and actually, one that's being discussed across the country. So I think we are learning about how to do things differently, both in instruction, but also, in our regular work.

And so I'll give you one very specific thing. I find that meetings that we conduct on Zoom are way more efficient. I think they go quicker. They're much more focused. I find it a great tool to use and it saves travel time. And so it's a small one, but one lots of us are using right now. And I personally intend to keep it, because I really, really like it. So I'll turn this back to Adam and then hopefully just a quick couple words.

JOEL MALINA: And let me just add another advantage of a Zoom, Mary, which is to see you with a diaper changing station behind you. That's a side of you I haven't seen before.

MARY OPPERMAN: And the Red Sox. See the Red Sox.

ADAM HOWELL: I just want to mention a few things and I'll kick it over to Mary to close. I want to thank you all, all of our panelists, so much for your time and your leadership here today. We really appreciate it. I also want to thank Matt Gorney, Gina Giambattista, Wendy Treat for facilitating this as well. Gina and Wendy with the Office of the Assemblies. Thank you for your efforts in setting this up, both the last one and this one.

And again, thank you all so much. We absolutely appreciate your leadership and your taking time to answer questions today. And Mary, I will leave it to you to say a few things and close this up.

MARY OPPERMAN: So I'm just going to say a couple of things and then don't hang up, because I want to give you, hopefully, your smile for the day before we close. First of all, if you have the wherewithal to do it, consider ordering takeout from our food establishments that are downtown. They could use your support. They're doing really amazing things. And I know you can't do that all the time, but if you have the ability to do it, please consider doing so.

Thank you for the fact that we can't answer all of your questions that you ask them anyway. And that's the best way for us as a community to stay together when we first started talking about this virus. Dr. Jones talk to us about what it meant to have a novel coronavirus. It means it's something we hadn't seen before. When we're in circumstances that we haven't experienced before, it means that the playbooks that we have to be adjusted. So we appreciate your patience as we do that. And now

hopefully, I can do this so that you have something to do to leave on a good note. Let's see if this works. No. OK, didn't work. Well, when I do that and on other Zooms, my adorable 5-month-old grandson's face-- like, a big face comes up. And so I'll be thinking about you. Find your joy where you can. And thank you for coming.

ADAM HOWELL: Thank you everyone stay alive and healthy and take care thanks for doing this. We appreciate it.

JOEL MALINA: Thank you.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you all for participating.