

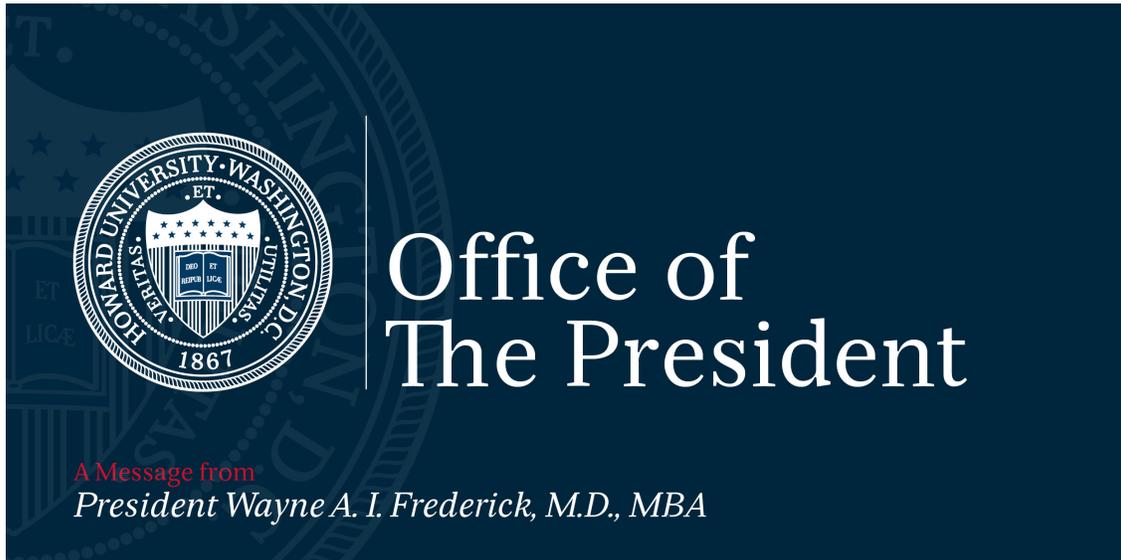
Office of the President: Updates

HU Communications <ouc@howard.edu>

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April 29, 2020

Dear Howard University Community,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones safe and well during this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. Although the practice of social distancing keeps us apart, please know that the safety of our students, our faculty and staff, and the health of your families are constantly on our minds as the Howard University leadership continues to work tirelessly on your behalf. Recently, the entire cabinet leadership team and myself had the pleasure of calling a list of various students, faculty and staff to personally thank you for your compassion, support and patience as we adapt to the circumstances around us. I had to convince a few people that it was really me and no, they were not in trouble! Our goal was to simply check in to see how everyone is doing and overall I believe our calls we're well received. It was a joy to connect with so many of you.

We continue to revise our academic plan in response to the pandemic, encouraging and assisting faculty in moving more of their classes online. The

budget is also being adjusted in expectation of a \$39 million shortfall in revenues, including \$6 million in refunds to students for room and board for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. Every effort is being made to close this deficit by decreasing non-personnel spending and effectively and efficiently using the federal funds secured in the CARES Act stimulus package. As of this writing, there is an additional \$12 million in unpaid student bills, which brings our total deficit to \$51 million. We will attempt to close this deficit by decreasing non-personnel spending and effectively and efficiently using the federal funds secured in the CARES Act stimulus package. However, this will leave us with a deficit as we begin the next fiscal year which starts July 1, 2020. We are grateful to our elected officials for their swift action to approve financial aid in consideration of universities like Howard that support Pell-eligible students to a significant degree. The CARES Act includes funding to support students over the next 18 months through Sept. 30, 2021. As soon as we receive the appropriated \$4.3 million designated to assist students with COVID-19 related emergencies and financial difficulties, we will roll out the grants beginning with graduating seniors.

Despite the challenges that we are facing, there are still moments of kindness shared among our Howard University community that bring joy. Most recently, I experienced this in the compassion of our Howard University Student Association (HUSA) and Howard University Staff Organization (HUSO) leadership teams. Both offered to return funds from their budgets to help close the Universities deficit gap. HUSA proposed using their funds to assist international students in getting home and funding scholarships for students with financial needs and emergencies. HUSO offered to accept budget cuts and assist with donations of annual leave to a Leave Bank for employees who may need to self-quarantine in the future. Additionally, we've witnessed overwhelming support from hundreds of alumni who are donating to the [Howard University Alumni Association Scholarship campaign](#) and awards are actively being distributed to students in need. These generous acts of kindness and selflessness are shining examples of the Bison spirit that will help get us through these difficult days.

As we look ahead to the next academic year, we continue to assess the risk in decreased revenues from enrollment, research grants, philanthropic gifts, and Howard University Hospital (HUH) net patient service revenue. I'm pleased to report that with the May 1 decision deadline a couple days away our freshman class goal of 2,000 students has almost been met and continuing students have signed up for housing and registered for classes at a record pace. Yet we

remain conservative in our enrollment predictions and will monitor the impact of the pandemic on the economy over the next 90 days as this may affect our students and their families ability to enroll.

All elective clinical activity at HUH has been suspended to prepare and manage the COVID-19 surge. This will result in a hospital deficit of \$9 million this fiscal year with potentially another significant decrease in the next. All avenues to mitigate this loss including scaling up telehealth activities are being deployed. The length of the surge will dictate our ability to reverse this financial loss. To close the gap, we will curtail all non-personnel spending and implement cost-saving actions that spare our workforce. Our priorities will remain focused on delivering a high-quality education, aiding our students as their financial circumstances evolve, preserving the jobs of our faculty and staff, and providing world-class healthcare to the citizens across our community in this moment of crisis. However, if the above described revenue deficit grows too large, we must consider personnel actions that may include furloughs, layoffs, and the suspension of contributions to the savings plan.

Howard University is at the forefront of the District of Columbia's response to the coronavirus pandemic. I have been appointed by Mayor Bowser to co-chair the Equity, Disparity Reduction, Vulnerable Populations Subcommittee for the ReOpen DC initiative and will share those learnings as appropriate to assist with our campus planning. The District predicts we will experience a mid-summer peak of COVID-19 infections. Based on medical projections, the city will need access to at least 1000 more hospital beds. As a result, the mayor has asked all District hospitals to expand capacity and HUH is adding hundreds of beds in short order. While the District government will underwrite this effort, additional funds from the University are required. This will be challenging, yet we understand the vital role HUH must play in saving lives. We are doing all we can to continue to safeguard our essential workforce with the necessary equipment they need to do their jobs safely and effectively.

In line with our mission, HUH will enhance our capabilities to fight the spread of coronavirus as the infection continues to disproportionately impact Black Americans. We are reviewing plans for the implementation of expanded testing, telehealth, and community engagement and will announce additional details in the coming weeks.

Given the expected COVID-19 peak in the District, and local government orders to stay at home, there will be no face-to-face undergraduate classes this

summer. Howard University will continue distance learning through both summer sessions. The return to clinical clerkships, internships, and practicums will be dictated by the stay-at-home orders in the District and other parts of the country.

We are planning for a best-case scenario that includes a campus re-open and face-to-face instruction in the Fall 2020 semester. In the event District officials do not relax or end social distancing policies, we will adjust and update the campus community accordingly. To facilitate the planning of this return to in-person instruction, I've asked Florence Prioleau, University Secretary and General Counsel, Dr. Hugh E. Mighty, Vice President of Clinical Affairs, Dr. Anthony Wutoh, Provost, and Dr. Tashni-Ann Dubroy, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, to spearhead a committee that will provide relevant recommendations and guidelines. The committee will also include representatives from the staff, student body, faculty, and local officials and assess the many complex issues involved, including testing requirements, social distancing, athletics, sanitation of the campus, housing assignments, the protection of high-risk individuals, and much more. The most essential ingredient for our combined success will be patience. The prediction of a second wave of infections in the Fall demand that we build flexibility into our plans.

I am delighted to present our event to celebrate the Class of 2020. The University will host a "Virtual Ceremony for the Conferring of Degrees in Course" on Saturday, May 9, 2020. I invite the entire Class to return to campus and participate in next year's Commencement festivities over Mother's Day Weekend 2021. The accomplishment of earning a degree from Howard University is something that our students, and all those who have supported them on their journey, deserve to commemorate. Although this is a drastic change from our original plans to gather on the Upper Quadrangle, we look forward to celebrating the achievements of our 2020 graduating class with the same reverence and jubilation as we do each year.

In closing, we owe a debt of gratitude to our frontline healthcare workers who embody the best of the Bison spirit, and I ask that you keep them foremost in your thoughts and prayers. The work that is being done by every employee at HUH is saving lives and for that we are grateful and proud of you all. I'd also like to extend thanks to the deans and faculty for their diligence, dedication, and excellence.

We are living in challenging times, but I find comfort in knowing that Howard University has endured trials and tribulations for 153 years and each time, she has risen to the occasion through the efforts of the dynamic students, faculty, staff and alumni. Please continue to work with us as we improve our ability to serve you and the Howard University community. We are Bison Strong because of our innate ability to tackle challenges head-on and exemplify equanimity under duress.

I extend continued prayers for safety and health to you and your loved ones.

Excellence in Truth and Service,

Wayne A. I. Frederick, M.D., MBA  
President



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