

## **A thank you message from President Gervan Fearon**

Brock University Communications <universitycom@brocku.ca>

Fri 3/20/2020 12:13 PM

To:

20 March 2020

Dear students, faculty, staff and members of the Brock community,

I am writing today to thank all of the many individuals across the entire University community who continue to help our students and the institution manage through what is undeniably a unique period during our lifetimes.

I am also writing to express my sincere support and encouragement to all of you – every student, staff and faculty member – as we pull together and deal with each challenge as it comes up. Together, you have been volunteers, supporters and colleagues to each other and have demonstrated your capacity to succeed and triumph over adversity.

The rapid global spread of COVID-19 has led to necessary dramatic announcements and sweeping changes to our normal society, measures taken to slow the rate of infection during this pandemic. On our campus and across the country, these steps are done to protect our health, safety and well-being – and to ease the burden on Canada's brave and dedicated health-care workers, as well as to ensure that those in the most need will have access to our health system.

At Brock, many individuals have contributed to the continued operations and activities of the University, admittedly under significantly modified conditions. Think of Brock as a city of 25,000 people. Besides having teaching, research and athletic activities that sustain hundreds of academic and student-engagement programs, we have our own retail stores, libraries, power generating facilities, campus security service, residential units, information technology, news media, food services, water mains, recreation centres, and so on.

To quickly modify the range of University activities – while minimizing adverse effects on thousands of people and many special facilities – is no simple matter, but I believe our Brock team would say it has all been an honour to conduct these activities in support of our students and faculty and staff. These dedicated people have remained composed and focused on problem-solving, on finding the best and safest methods for adjusting activities, and ensuring the health and well-being of all members of the University community.

I have been particularly moved by a cadre of people from departments across the University who have volunteered – including giving up their weekends – to help facilitate the urgent response, and help co-ordinate the departure of students moving

out of residence and back to their homes. They have not hesitated to step up in an hour of need, and I am truly moved and inspired by their acts of selflessness.

It is too early to tell how long we will all be making adjustments to address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we do know that the outstanding character and action of members of the Brock community will allow us to support each other, our families and members of our communities during this period. Brock is a caring community, and this includes caring about the faculty and staff who comprise the Brock University team. Our decisions will continue to be centred around “putting our people first” and maintaining a sense of a caring community.

In the coming weeks, our jobs will require engaged creativity and continued efforts as we adapt to this evolving environment and situation, but the well-being of our people and our University community will remain a core principle and priority. We will continue to communicate updates to the Brock community through emails, website updates and social media posts.

In a period of dramatic change, it is important for us all to recognize and to thank our students, faculty and staff for their outstanding effort. As an economist, I am well aware of the developments in the market and the future challenges of the economy. However, there will be time for these considerations and for action to ameliorate any difficulties that may arise. At this time, it is important that we focus on individual and community health, safety and well-being, and continue to make decisions as a kind and caring community, and as global citizens.

Please take care of yourselves and your families, but also take comfort in knowing you are part of a special community here at Brock University. Your health and well-being are central to all our decision-making, and central to our thoughts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gervan Fearon', with a stylized, overlapping initial 'G'.

Gervan Fearon

President and Vice-Chancellor, Brock University