

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Michael V. Drake, MD  
President



Dear Ohio State Community:

Spring commencement is here. It is a special time when we reflect on what it means to be a Buckeye, celebrate the extraordinary achievements of our graduates and envision the bright future they will help create.

Tomorrow we will celebrate the Class of 2020 at our virtual commencement that will be streamed from Ohio Stadium to homes of Buckeyes across Ohio and around the world. This class has faced unprecedented disruptions and challenges over the last several months, and they have persevered. We are proud of you, and we are grateful for all who made your success possible, especially your loving and supportive families and your dedicated professors and mentors.

A pre-ceremony program featuring messages from students and leaders will begin at 11:30 a.m. with virtual commencement starting at noon.

The [livestreamed](#) ceremony will also be broadcast on WOSU TV and statewide on The Ohio Channel. You can share messages of congratulations on social media using #OSUGrad.

We look forward to gathering in person to recognize the Class of 2020 at a future date when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, we will join together virtually to celebrate this special moment.

## **Post-pandemic planning**

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine has announced a phased plan to begin bringing Ohioans back to work and reopen businesses. As shared earlier, Ohio State's post-pandemic operations task force is working to develop a phased transition back to on-campus operations. In addition to closely monitoring state and federal guidance, the task force will use a data-driven approach for recommending when it is safe to begin transitioning back onto our campuses. We will share regular updates and decisions as the task force's work progresses.

We are extending the university state of emergency declaration through Saturday, May 9, which enables us to utilize Disaster Leave ([Policy 6.28](#)) and is essential to providing the university with flexibility in making a variety of financial decisions over an extended period if necessary. For now and until further notice, all university events are canceled through July 6, and all non-essential university employees are to continue teleworking and remain off campus, physical distancing and taking all other precautions to stay safe. We will continue to reevaluate and update our plans based on evolving conditions and keep you fully informed.

While the information about the virus continues to evolve, and we will need to be flexible, our current tentative goal is to have an announcement of our plans for the fall semester by mid-June. Please see my [message](#) from Thursday.

## **#GivingTuesdayNow**

The response of our university community to COVID-19 has been extraordinary — from the resilience of our faculty, staff and students to advance our academic mission to the heroic work of our essential employees on the front lines of critical patient care and support efforts.

At the same time, Buckeyes everywhere have demonstrated great generosity. On Tuesday, May 5, the university will join a global initiative to support students, health care professionals, research and COVID-19 relief efforts through #GivingTuesdayNow. Through the generosity of Ohio State donors, gifts made on Tuesday will be matched \$1 for \$1. You can learn more by visiting the [COVID-19 Support webpage](#).

## **Together As Buckeyes emergency grants program**

As a reminder, Ohio State launched the [Together As Buckeyes emergency grants program](#) to assist students who are having difficulty with living expenses or facing other unexpected financial challenges related to COVID-19. It is available to undergraduate, graduate and professional students — subject to eligibility requirements — through the Student Financial Aid office. The size of these grants will vary based on each student's circumstances.

Brenda and I hope you and your loved ones are safe and well. Thank you again for your collective hard work and positive spirit as we close the academic year.

Sincerely,

**Michael V. Drake, MD**

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## COVID-19 Resources

- [Information about coronavirus and the university's response](#)
- [Guidance for students, faculty and staff](#)
- [Resources for faculty](#)
- [Resources for COVID-19 research](#)
- [Resources for students](#)
- [Resources for staff](#)

## Wellness Resources

- Faculty and staff can use the [Human Resources Keep Well website](#), the [Chief Wellness Officer Health and Wellness page](#) and [Your Plan For Health](#).
- Students can use the [Counseling and Consultation Service](#) (CCS) and the [Buckeye Peer Access Line](#) (PAL), which operates Monday through Friday from 8 p.m. to midnight.
- CCS also provides guidance for [ways for faculty and staff to support students](#).
- The Ohio State: Wellness app is designed for students but offers tips and guidance useful for all members of our community. It is available for [Android](#) and [iOS](#) devices.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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