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Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 4:31 PM

To: Gilwee, Vicki M <vicki.gilwee@med.uvm.edu>

Subject: ~Message from Rick Page to Larner Community~

Dear Larner Community,

Today marks exactly a month since Governor Scott issued his Stay Home/Stay Safe order. Despite the hardship, and the lives lost in our state and throughout the country, we see evidence everywhere that we have all collectively reduced transmission and, for now at least, avoided the worst-case scenarios. For example, as of today there is not a single patient with COVID-19 on a ventilator at the University of Vermont Medical Center.

While we all want to return to some semblance of a normal life, and in the Larner College of Medicine, to return fully to our missions of education, research and clinical care, we are not yet ready. On the other hand, we are actively engaged in the plans for eventual return more fully to our three core missions. In fact, Senior Associate Deans Christa Zehle, Claude Deschamps and Gordon Jensen are engaged in groups developing plans for resumption of clinical education, elective clinical care and laboratory research, respectively.

This week, for the first time ever, we graduated medical students in April. On Monday the 20th, after our Medical Curriculum Committee and Committee on Advancement approved the request of 49 students to graduate early, the University of Vermont Faculty Senate approved their degrees. The next day, President Garimella provided his approval and suddenly the world had 49 new doctors. Our plan for early graduation was developed to respond to the worst-case scenario of a COVID-19 surge where our newly-minted graduates could have been pressed into immediate service. We can all be thankful that this was not the case but, likewise, we should be grateful that these individuals volunteered for service. We must also acknowledge the many ways students, staff and faculty have volunteered to serve during this crisis. Our Larner community has risen to this challenge.

I was proud to provide an update on Larner activities to our Medical Alumni Association Executive Committee, via Zoom, on Wednesday evening. They expressed their support for all of you and one alumna was delighted to hear of our LCOM Cares Service Corps web site, providing volunteer opportunities in our community that can be provided even for those living out of state.

This is Medical Laboratory Professionals Week, an annual celebration of medical laboratory professionals and pathologists and the vital role they play in health care and patient advocacy. What a fitting time for us to acknowledge all of the members of our Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, who have coordinated efforts for the University of Vermont Health Network and the state in testing for SARS-CoV-2. Over a period of just a few weeks, thanks to the leadership of Dr. Debra Leonard and her outstanding team, capacity for testing in our state has advanced to ~2,200 tests daily. Broad availability of testing is acknowledged to be critical to each community's readiness to resume more normal activities. Please join me in acknowledging and thanking these professionals for their work to support our patients and providers.

We will have our second virtual Town Hall for the Larner College of Medicine on Tuesday, April 28 at 5:30 p.m. As we did last time, senior leaders will provide updates and answer questions. We are honored that President Suresh Garimella will join us at this event. In addition, Dr. Jason Bates, Professor

of Medicine, will tell us about his lung research program and his development, in partnership with University of Vermont engineers, of the “Vermontilator.”

I want to thank you all for what you do for the Larner College of Medicine. I am reminded daily of the talent, ingenuity, commitment and professionalism of our students, staff and faculty. We can’t deny the difficult circumstances everywhere around us, and the challenges going forward. But things will not always be this way. Please stay well, and care for those around you.

Rick

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