

Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students,

William Makepeace Thackeray once wrote, "Life is a mirror. If you frown at it, it frowns back. If you smile, it returns the greeting." I think this reads like an epithet you might find in a fortune cookie or box of Cracker Jacks, but the words actually provide a powerful metaphor. We all have the ability to look for the positives in any situation and not the downside. Certainly these past weeks of adhering to stay at home orders have dramatically changed our lives in many ways, and some of you are beginning to feel quarantine fatigue. However, I believe this time has taught all of us some valuable lessons about our resilience, our relationships with family and friends, and ability to create happiness and find enjoyment in the little things at home.

As we continue to celebrate our Graduation Week, I want to commend our graduating students who have shown the entire Midwestern University community just how incredibly resilient, thoughtful and purposeful they have been in making sure they completed all required coursework online, accepted the necessary change in commencement plans, and decided to make the best of this difficult situation. While they will not be celebrated by a parade of applause, except by their own family members and cherished friends, they will be forever remembered as the graduates who began their health care career at a time when their services and knowledge were needed the most.

Our faculty and staff will remember these graduates through many kind and thoughtful moments. While our Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, and Cardiovascular students held virtual breakfasts, luncheons and evenings together to celebrate their accomplishments and announce student awards, the students of the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine had other plans. Our CCOM students decided to honor their faculty and staff members by awarding them a thank you message. They drove to the homes of those being honored to receive a plaque from the class. As you can imagine, when members of the graduating class surprisingly knocked on the doors of our faculty and staff, they were welcomed with great surprise and appreciation.

The COVID-19 Response Team met today, May 20, 2020, to discuss a number of operational issues that will allow our clinics to begin welcoming additional patients and bringing more faculty and staff back to our campuses and clinics. Please note, we are not returning everyone to campus on June 1, 2020, but will work with supervisors and managers to begin scheduling additional faculty and staff in our departments as we move toward increasing operations later in the summer months.

Announcements

- We do not have any new cases of COVID-19 on our campuses; we believe social distancing, frequent handwashing and wearing face masks continue to protect our community.
- Federal Work Study positions are available to students who qualify for the summer 2020 and into the 2020-21 academic year. Guidelines were communicated today for supervisors to post and advertise available positions.

When you look into your mirror this evening, try not to do yourself a disservice through a frown; instead when you smile, we shine, just as our graduates are shining this entire week.

Be well.

Dr. G.