

Dear students, employees, and friends of Moraine Park Technical College,

I hope this message finds you well and that you have found ways to safely enjoy the first few days of spring. It has been a couple of weeks since my video message, and in the true nature of this pandemic, a lot has happened since then.

First, I want to celebrate a major accomplishment by our employees. Thanks to college-wide teamwork and efforts, we were able to move more than 600 class sections and nearly all our services from a face-to-face to online formats. We are still working to find solutions for some of our program classes that require classroom or lab instruction for full completion. I am hopeful we can find ways for our students to complete these classes, while still meeting the state's social distancing and safer at home orders. I am proud of you all for embracing this difficult situation as an opportunity to learn, grow, and be flexible in a time of uncertainty. This impressive accomplishment speaks directly to the hard work and dedication of our Moraine Park team. Their selfless commitment to our students and communities is apparent in their everyday work, and for that, I am grateful.

Last week, we made the difficult decision to postpone our annual commencement ceremony to Saturday, June 27. The location has also been tentatively moved to the Beaver Dam High School Field House. However, in stating that, it is equally important for me to mention that if the safer at home order is still in place or if the COVID-19 pandemic results in the loss of our commencement location, we will cancel the 2020 ceremony. Please know we are making every effort to move forward with a commencement ceremony this year. It is our sincere hope that we can all celebrate together, but this situation is still very fluid, and a lot can change between then and now. I ask for your continued patience as we move through the next few weeks. If we need to cancel the ceremony, arrangements will be made for our 2019-20 graduates to participate in next spring's ceremony.

Finally, in alignment with both state and national decisions, the College has determined its facilities will remain closed until further notice. With the nature of this pandemic, it would be difficult to rely on having one specific reopen date where everyone returns to campus simultaneously. Instead, the Moraine Park leadership team is working diligently on a phased reopening plan to ensure the safety of everyone who enters our facilities. More information regarding the College's strategy to reopen will be announced in the coming weeks, and we will continue to hold classes and provide services virtually until we can all be together on campus again.

Please continue to stay connected to Moraine Park's updates by visiting morainepark.edu/coronavirus, checking the student or employee portals, or connecting with us on social media.

As always, don't hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

I wish you all a safe and happy Easter weekend.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Baerwald

President, Moraine Park Technical College