UC COVID-19 Newsletter: Week of Sept. 14, 2020

Welcome to the latest COVID-19 update with information about how the University of California is responding and adapting to the pandemic, as well as campus, health center and national laboratory news.

Preparedness and Response
Critical operations continue at all UC campus and system locations, and our health centers continue to provide vital services to their communities.

- Two UC campuses – UC San Diego and UCSF – will pilot the use of a smartphone technology to notify users if they have had a high-risk COVID-19 exposure that may result in infection.
- To help health centers across the country to better predict how to meet the needs of their communities, UCLA Health recently released the system it used for projecting the expected hospital resources needed for the care of COVID-19 patients.
- UC Santa Barbara mathematicians explain the relationship between COVID-19 transmission and air circulation.
- As part of its Return to Learn strategy, UC San Diego is utilizing wastewater monitoring to detect SARS-Cov-2 and reduce the transmission of the virus. This type of detection method is being utilized by other UC campuses as well.
- In a recent Q&A with Kim Kanatani, director of the UCI Institute and Museum of California Art, discussed the creative ways museums can engage audiences amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Student and Campus Life
UC is committed to ensuring continuity and providing resources for its campus and lab communities.

- Summer internships for UC Riverside students looked a bit different this year, but summer plans for those in the Guardian Scholars Program, a campus network designed to support students transitioning from the foster care system into the university, didn’t halt. All program participants were able to fulfill their internships from home.
- UC Merced created a new, online space for students called Student Dens, which are virtual hubs for undergraduates to develop friendships with other students, engage the resources of a world-class research university and connect to the vibrant community of students, faculty and staff.
- Earlier this month, UC Santa Cruz released a “Year in Review,” highlighting how the campus has adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic and the surrounding wildfires.
- The annual San Joaquin Expanding Your Horizon (SJEYH) career conference, which is co-sponsored by the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, has gone virtual. This year marks the 28th year for SJEYH, a conference with a long history of fostering awareness of careers in STEM.
Research
UC researchers continue to advance understanding and develop new tools to address and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Below are highlights of some of the efforts taking place.

- **The National Institutes of Health** recently awarded UC Davis and two other universities a grant to train and empower community health workers in research best practices, which could help reduce disparities related to the ongoing pandemic.
- **The U.S. may have experienced more than 6.4 million cases of COVID-19 by April 18, 2020**, according to a probability analysis conducted by UC Berkeley School of Public Health – that is nine times more than the number of confirmed cases in the same period, which was 721,245.
- **UCSF is leading a clinical trial to test the effects of infusions of stem cells drawn from bone marrow** in the hopes of finding a therapy for the sickest of COVID-19 patients who have severe lung injury called acute respiratory distress syndrome.

Ongoing Challenges
We are thankful for the emergency legislation that Congress has passed to date, but we know that California and our nation won’t fully recover without additional investments to our states, as well as in research, health care and education.

- In June, we shared a letter with your office from UC President Emeritus Janet Napolitano and the 10 University chancellors outlining **UC’s requests as related to the fourth COVID-19 emergency legislation** that Congress is working on. Specifically, the letter outlines the priorities as related to education, research, and tax and financing issues, including the need for additional support for states and territories.
- Also in June, we shared a letter with your office from Executive Vice President of UC Health Carrie Byington highlighting several health care financing, higher education and workforce priorities that are critical to academic health centers like UC Health for inclusion in the next COVID-19 emergency legislation.

Learn More About UC’s Coronavirus Response Efforts

If you have any questions about this update or other issues, please contact Chris Harrington with UC’s Office of Federal Governmental Relations.