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

TODAY: Join us at 2 pm ET for our congressional briefing “The Education Stabilization Fund,” which will focus on an update from UC’s financial aid directors on the distribution of funds through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund.

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.

- Six of Los Angeles County’s largest nonprofit health systems with hospitals, clinics and care facilities across the region – including UCLA Health – have come together to encourage community members to put health first and access care when needed. >> Read More
- UC Irvine is partnering with the Orange County Health Care Agency to participate in a rigorous, large-scale, population-based study that will generate a more accurate estimate of the true prevalence of the pandemic in Orange County – which, with 3.2 million people, is the sixth-largest county in the U.S. >> Read More
- UCSF medical students created a COVID-19 fact check page available in multiple languages that is aimed at debunking misconceptions and providing information to the public. >> Read More
- UC Berkeley’s COVID-19 pop-up lab is branching out from evaluating symptomatic students to also assessing nursing home residents, East Bay’s homeless population, front-line firefighters and police officers and, now, utility workers throughout the state. >> Read More
- The UC San Diego Rady School of Management has launched the Rady School Business Recovery Coalition to help businesses in the San Diego region navigate the unprecedented challenges faced by COVID-19. >> Read More
- At UC Santa Barbara, anthropologists, physicians and tribal leaders are developing a strategy for managing COVID-19 among an indigenous population. >> Read More

Student and Campus Life
UC is committed to ensuring continuity and providing resources for its students.

- Last weekend, UC’s semester campuses virtually celebrated their 2020 graduates. Nothing can replace in-person ceremonies, but until we can safely gather again, we continue to do our best to make graduation feel special.
  - After more than 100 UC Berkeley students built the virtual Blockeley University in Minecraft, graduating Cal students attended a virtual, mock commencement ceremony in an animated version of Memorial Stadium. >> Read More
  - On May 16, UC Merced held its first-ever virtual ceremony celebrating the class of 2020. >> Read More
• On May 21, the UC National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement will host a virtual webinar to address how remote learning has changed the student environment and how we can help onboard new students despite change. >> Read More
• UC Riverside’s community garden is providing fresh fruit and vegetables for students living on campus. >> Read More
• As many remain sheltered in place, the Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art is focused on providing virtual avenues for art, activity and connection through a digital initiative: Manetti Shrem Museum at Home. >> Read More

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.

• Researchers at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory are launching a study of the risk of airborne transmission of viruses within buildings and how to mitigate those risks. >> Read More
• A drug discovered in UC Davis’s Bruce Hammock Laboratory may control the body’s inflammatory response to COVID-19 and could help patients in their recovery. >> Read More
• UC Santa Cruz’s biomolecular engineer Nader Pourmand is evaluating the use of a novel nanosensor to provide rapid, low-cost and accurate serology tests for coronavirus antibodies. >> Read More
• Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory researchers are studying ways to safely and rapidly remove viral threats from N95 respirators, without compromising the device’s fit and its ability to filter airborne particles, so they can be reused. >> Read More
• Modeling the COVID-19 epidemic – as researchers at Los Alamos National Laboratory are doing – sheds light on its growth rate, time of origin, future case counts and the effectiveness of mitigation strategies. >> Watch the Video

Ongoing Challenges
Even with Congress’ vital support, many of our students and their families continue to suffer. We’re thankful for the emergency legislation that has been signed into law, but know that our community won’t fully recover without additional investments. Continued prioritization in research, health care and education are necessary as these three pillars are essential for our collective recovery.

• On May 14, Executive Vice President of UC Health Carrie Byington shared with your office a letter expressing appreciation for Congress’ efforts to ensure that health systems and providers could respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, which also highlighted the specific provisions in the HEROES Act that, if enacted into law, would be helpful to safety net health providers, such as UC Health. >> Read More
• Details about UC’s specific priorities and ongoing challenges are detailed in an April 10 letter from UC President Janet Napolitano that was shared with your office. >> Read More

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