



Statement from the Presidents of Clarkson University, St. Lawrence University, SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam

Tuesday, March 17, 2020

As the presidents of the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley, we hold the utmost concern for the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff – and for the communities that we are a part of in New York’s North Country. We depend on our communities, and our communities depend on us.

We are working together closely among the four Associated Colleges, and also with community organizations such as the Canton and Potsdam Central School Districts, the St. Lawrence-Lewis Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), St. Lawrence Health System, and the St. Lawrence County Health Department to coordinate our individual and collective responses to the dynamic and constantly evolving coronavirus pandemic.

During this rapidly changing situation, communication is key. We must rely on reputable information and ensure that we communicate frequently with one another. We recognize that the impacts of the Coronavirus will extend far beyond the infections and cases of COVID-19. We recognize and share a concern for our local businesses and the childcare needs that will arise from the closure of our local school districts.

As businesses and institutions are forced to suspend operations, as gatherings of people must be avoided, and with the closure of educational institutions, many residents in our area will have a tremendous sense of loss. We are committed to working with our local Chambers of Commerce to support our businesses, and we know we will need to find new ways to do so. We are working to bring a variety of our events online so that individuals will have an outlet.

At a meeting of the parties mentioned above on Friday, March 13th, much of the discussion focused on the critical community impact of food insecurity and need for childcare. With school closures we recognize that these will be heightened. In addition, we are exploring ways that we can support the childcare needs of the community with the New York State Education Department and the Office of Children and Family Services. We are committed to working with our partners to help address these concerns.

In the days ahead we will explore and advance steps to help our community in need. Together we will get through this and come together to sustain each other.

Signed:

Anthony G. Collins
President
Clarkson University



Kristin G. Esterberg
President
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