March 18, 2020

TO: MSU alumni

FROM: Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D.
President

As a valued member of the Spartan family, I appreciate the trust you have placed in me to ensure the health and well-being of our students, faculty, staff and the entire MSU community. I also want you to know that you are in my thoughts. I know you may feel stress and concern about keeping your own families and loved ones safe at this time. You are important to us, and I urge you to follow the guidance of health officials and to take care of yourselves and others during these unprecedented times.

Michigan State University is doing its part to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus. Many individuals, groups and units have stepped up and are making a positive difference. With that as background, I want to personally update you on the situation here on campus and beyond, including some of the steps we are taking to protect health and safety while continuing the important mission of our university.

• **On March 11 MSU began to offer classes and instruction in virtual settings.** This will continue through the conclusion of the semester. Faculty and students have responded well to the virtual instruction and lessons, and while some classes are more challenging to move online, the creativity being applied is impressive. I have the utmost confidence that our students will receive an excellent education, no matter the format.

• **We have postponed commencement.** At this point, we will make every effort to reschedule and allow our class of 2020 an appropriate time and place to celebrate successful Spartan journeys. We know many students and their families are disappointed, and we appreciate their understanding of the significance of this challenge.

• **Our employees are working remotely except those whose jobs require a specific location.** The work needed to keep our university running will continue, and we are grateful for the commitment from all.

• **Research activities, under appropriate health and safety conditions, are continuing at the present time except for most research related to human subjects or animals.** The latter are continuing only if they have been deemed essential. All research support units are operational, although staff members are working remotely where possible. You can learn more about how our research teams are affected through the Office of the Senior Vice President for Research and Innovation.

• **Several alumni gatherings have been postponed or canceled.** While we are saddened to announce these decisions, safety and well-being remain our top priorities. We will explore alternative dates for upcoming and postponed events as state and federal guidelines allow. You may stay up to date by visiting givingto.msu.edu/events and alumni.msu.edu.

• **We are working with students facing unexpected financial hardship.** The Support Our Spartans (SOS) Student Emergency Needs Fund allows MSU to step in to assist students who are in need.
It is our goal to be both proactive and safe and continue the important work of the university. As we navigate this rapidly evolving situation, we will continue to make operational and education decisions based on scientific data and health care practices that will keep us safer.

I encourage you to stay informed and gather authoritative information on the pandemic yourself. We are encouraging staff to visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization websites for the very latest information. To stay updated on our efforts, please visit msu.edu/coronavirus.

On a personal note, I would like to thank those of you who have reached out to me and our staff offering help and support. This, along with the dedication I have witnessed — whether it’s supporting our students or keeping our campus running — is uplifting and shows the resilience of the Spartan spirit.

Thank you for your continued support of Michigan State. I hope you and your loved ones stay well.