Dear Einstein Community:

As we embark on the July 4th weekend, I want to wish everyone a safe holiday, especially one that can now be enjoyed somewhat more directly among friends and family since the COVID-19 pandemic has eased a bit in our region—although I urge you all to be vigilant in remaining safe and protecting your health and that of others.

I’ve both written and said this many times, but I think it still bears repeating: Our community has performed remarkably well over the past several months. People are working harder than ever—both off campus and on—because so much has been demanded of us. Everyone has risen to the challenge.

It’s been hard enough to cope with COVID-19 and the threat it has posed to those we know and love. But we are also living at a time when our country is confronting its endemic racism in a way it hasn’t in the past. While this is certainly a moment of great hope, it is also very difficult to face our history and take the full measure of the work that lies ahead.

I strongly believe that Einstein’s mission and strong commitment to social and economic justice will enable us to respond to these historic times in a manner we can be proud of. Our community wants to help solve the problems that confront us, not stand idly on the sidelines—and I fully support all your efforts.

John F. Kennedy once noted that “When written in Chinese, the word crisis is composed of two characters—one represents danger, and the other represents opportunity.” I think that’s exactly right. We all know the clear and present dangers that confront us. But I’m optimistic because many of you are focusing on the opportunities.
Our students are eager to assist those who struggle with health disparities they unfairly shoulder and to treat critically ill patients on the wards. Our faculty members have begun intense and productive collaborations to both better understand COVID-19 and discover ways to combat the disease. Our diversity and inclusion initiative is moving forward, focusing on changes in faculty and student recruitment and retention. And our employees are finding hundreds of ways to help each other and support our institution.

All this is possible because of our core values and belief systems, which make us part of a caring and dedicated community that has an unwavering commitment to helping the underserved and the underrepresented.

As we approach the Fourth of July, I am reminded of graduate student Victoria Sedwick’s moving commentary that was recently published on our intranet on the meaning of Juneteenth and the reminder of the admonition from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that “we are not free until we are all free."

Moving words to reflect on as we celebrate the upcoming holiday.

Sincerely,

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