



BETHUNE – COOKMAN UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1904 by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune

E. LaBrent Chrite, Ph.D., President

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

October 16, 2020

Dear Wildcat Community:

I hope this note finds each of you and your loved ones safe and well. As you know, the University's overwhelming priority at this time remains the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff. To date, the University's comprehensive COVID-19 preparedness plan, *Wildcat Campus Reopening Roadmap*, has yielded remarkably positive results. We have delivered a total of nearly 5,000 COVID-19 tests on campus this fall.

The University had 10 positive COVID-19 cases among students as of last week— an enviable positivity rate by any standard. We have also had 13 confirmed cases among faculty and staff, including the tragic loss of B-CU staff member Wenda Williams.

I want to acknowledge the work of our health and safety team under the leadership of Dr. Franklin Patterson and Dr. Sandra Tucker. I also want to acknowledge our community – especially our students – in their commitment to adhere to the safety, distancing and masking protocols that are in place. **It is now time for us to double down on these practices**, through the end of the academic year.

Over the course of this week, the campus has identified three positive student cases. This represents an exponential and unacceptable increase in our positivity rates. With the onset of the flu season and the eventual emergence of cooler weather, now is **not** the time for any of us to succumb to the complacency that could possibly result from living with this virus for all these months. For our students in particular, we have sent a number of you home for violating campus COVID-19 guidelines. We will not hesitate to send more students home for behaviors that are inconsistent with these guidelines. B-CU has clearly demonstrated its resilience, fortitude and its capacity to survive and to even thrive, regardless of circumstance. We must **collectively live this commitment** for the remainder of this academic semester.

Here are some important reminders that will help keep our campus safe. My expectation is that each of us will do our part to adhere to these and related guidelines:

- All off-campus students must go through daily temperature checks at the CCE
- DO NOT come to campus if you have any symptoms

BCU – Where legacy Creates Destiny

- Wear your mask over your mouth and nose
- Maintain 6 feet of social distance
- Wash your hands regularly and use hand sanitizer
- Do NOT congregate
- Get tested when it is your time to do so

The semester ends November 21st. We have every intention of keeping our community safely on campus until that time. This will not be possible without the support of every member of our Wildcat Family. Thank you for your consideration and do take care of yourselves and one another during this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. LaBrent Chrite". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E" and a distinct "L" and "C".

E. LaBrent Chrite
Bethune-Cookman University President