



AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE *to the* BUTLER COMMUNITY

Dear Butler Community,

I hope you have had the opportunity to read my message from last evening regarding immediate steps we are taking in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). If not, I encourage you to visit our [website](#) where you can find the message, along with other relevant and up-to-date information.

My sincere thanks to the dedicated people at Butler who have been working tirelessly as we monitor this public health crisis and developing plans for our campus. Our efforts are being done with the highest regard for the greater good of the Butler community as well as the people who live in the surrounding region and are also affected by this dangerous virus.

The announcement yesterday was the first of many as we address a constantly changing situation involving significant uncertainty ahead. I am sure many of you have questions and, quite frankly, there are some that we are still contemplating as the situation unfolds. Nonetheless, we will do our best to make decisions and keep the community apprised.

For the moment, however, I would like to simply take pause from the planning and logistics, and provide some thoughts on the current global crisis, our campus situation, and the impact it is having on each of us in a personal and emotional way.

Certainly the Butler community—along with other communities across the nation and the globe—is confronting some very serious challenges. I understand that the never-ending stream of disturbing news, cancellations, and changes to life as we know it weigh heavily on many of us. Indeed, the next few weeks, perhaps months, may be unlike anything we have experienced in our lifetime.

At the same time, I am confident that together we will reach the other side of this crisis and that campus life will return to normal. The preventative measures being taken by organizations such as cities, universities, and sports leagues are critical to confronting this health emergency. At this point, as medical experts work toward positive solutions—which I am confident they will—the best course of action in defeating this outbreak is to undertake aggressive public measures to slow the spread of the virus and to protect our health system from undue burden.

The steps that Butler is taking are intended to reduce the risk of spreading the virus and minimize the number of people sick at any one time. I recognize that young, healthy students who are at low risk comprise the largest population of our community. However, such individuals can still contract and unknowingly spread the virus, which threatens those who are at higher risk—including those students who are immuno-compromised by serious illness or medication.

To our students, especially those who participate in hands-on learning experiences, practices, performances, athletics, and many other activities that cannot be conducted online, I know the safety measures we have taken may be deeply disappointing. You have worked extraordinarily hard to engage in these opportunities, and I regret that this period of your college experience is subject to such uncertainty. As a parent and as your president, I wish I could prevent this. But my highest priority is to keep you safe.

Unfortunately, you are now one of the generations of Butler students that has had to face a serious public crisis. Although today's particular health emergency is unprecedented, previous crises faced by Butler students have included wars, illnesses, and disasters, all of which disrupted life and learning and necessitated sacrifices by our community.

You may hear from loved ones that the resilience you gain during periods of hardship will make you stronger in the long run. I can attest to the wisdom of this adage, but also appreciate the fact that hardship is quite distressing at the time it is occurring. Many of us from older generations who have lived through periods of crisis know that together, our Butler community will successfully navigate these

uncharted waters. And by joining the effort to mitigate the spread of this disease, you are actually helping to save lives.

To our faculty and staff, I want to thank you for your support, flexibility, and willingness to roll up your sleeves as we do our absolute best on behalf of our students. I recognize that you are doing the great work of the University, in pursuit of our educational mission and the well-being of our students, all while you may be experiencing your own anxiety and uncertainty. I consider myself fortunate to be working alongside you through this challenge, and can't imagine a group of academic professionals better positioned for success. I am committed to ensuring the University does everything it can to provide support to you and your families.

I ask all of you for your understanding as our plans evolve and change. We have caring and talented people assessing the appropriate course of action for Butler University, but I recognize that our plans may have unexpected ramifications and unintended consequences. I can assure you that while we do not have perfect vision of the manner in which this crisis will be resolved or when our campus life will return to normal, we are doing our absolute best to ensure the well-being of our campus and greater community. I ask for your patience and, as always, [welcome your thoughts, questions, and suggestions](#).

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim', written in a cursive style.

James M. Danko
President, Butler University