

March 17, 2020

Dear RCAAS Program Participants & Families,

I realize that we are currently experiencing an unprecedented amount of uncertainty in the midst of this complex situation. Circumstances are rapidly changing, and our next steps and options are not always clear.

Last week, the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (NJ DDD) provided guidance closing all Day Programs and discontinuing providers from engaging in any community-based supports. This can be accessed here: <https://nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/documents/division-update-COVID19-03132020.pdf>

Additional resources/updates related to NJDDD guidance in response to the Coronavirus can be accessed via the NJ Department of Human Services website here: <https://nj.gov/humanservices/coronavirus.html>

In light of this guidance from NJ DDD, **we do not anticipate that we will be able to resume campus/community/center-based services on 3/23** as originally planned. We are currently examining all options for supporting our students, program participants, staff, and families. It is becoming very clear that it is possible that our campus/center-based operations may not resume for some time and we are exploring all options for remote support.

I want to reiterate that the concerns and needs of our staff and the families we serve are at the forefront of our minds. We recognize that the option of remote instruction which is currently being adopted by many educational/instructional programs may not be a good approximation of the type of supports and services that we typically provide to many our program participants.

I have been working closely with GSAPP Associate Dean Lara Delmolino and Dean Francine Conway throughout the weekend and yesterday to filter the incoming information and seek additional guidance from the university leadership and the NJ DDD. We all share a commitment to determining the best course of action at every step along the way for our students, program participants, staff, and their families. We are doing everything possible to ensure the health and safety of our entire organization, meet our legal and ethical obligations, provide essential and meaningful services, and protect the livelihood of our amazing employees.

Please know that as additional guidance is forthcoming and as we are able to make decisions, that we will communicate information as rapidly as possible. Specifically, I will be in touch again with additional detail concerning the plan for next week once this has been finalized. I hope that you are continue to be well and hope to be in touch again soon with additional information.

Best,  
Christopher