



From the Office of the President

Dr. Lonnie L. Howard

LAMAR INSTITUTE
OF TECHNOLOGY

March 31, 2020

From: The President (COVID-19)
To: The College and Local Community

Dear Students, Faculty, Staff, and Neighbors,

With over 8,100 students (credit/noncredit) annually, LIT has a social responsibility to help protect the health, safety, and vitality of this community amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Being a state agency, the college does not fall under the City of Beaumont or Jefferson County's 'Stay-at-Home' orders. However, I have contacted Mayor Ames and County Judge Branick informing them of our commitment to do more to help *flatten the curve* of this virus.

LIT will continue to work remotely and use alternative/distance learning until the semester ends. In accordance with Mayor and Judge's requests, starting today until the county ends its order on April 10, we will significantly scale-back (33%) the time that the college is physically opened Monday-Friday (Mon., Tue., Thu.: 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. Wed. 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Fri. 8 a.m. - noon). We are moving these support services to online via innovative communication technologies, and essential instructional and operational staff will return **April 13**. With these new temporary hours, employees will still be able to maintain 40-hour work weeks, instructional labs, evening classes, etc.

One could ask; why not *close* LIT? While this situation is ever-evolving and could change, we are balancing every decision against the reality that thousands of our students are on Federal Financial Aid, in labs such as welding that are not online friendly, must meet regional accreditation standards, need to graduate this semester, and have to get jobs (at a livable wage). Plus, the community is depending on the 'graduates' from LIT to help sustain the economic vitality of Southeast Texas. Simply stated, the college by definition is essential. But having you here with some peace of mind is essential too. We will have offices and labs continuously cleaned, practice social distancing, remain in groups of 10 or less, and be sensitive to child/senior care issues. To enhance two-way communication, there will be an email set-up to answer your questions or report items that require attention (with replies within 24-hours).

It has been said, "*The darkest hour is just before the dawn.*" LIT students do not give up. Your faculty and staff deserve a BIG thank you for being so flexible to help ensure everyone will complete their courses. Let's also thank the program directors, department chairs, and executive team. They are being stretched in unimaginable ways [due to past enrollment growth and now this crisis]. To add some relief; today, I will be approving the immediate implementation of Lead Faculty and an Associate Dean of Student Success position.

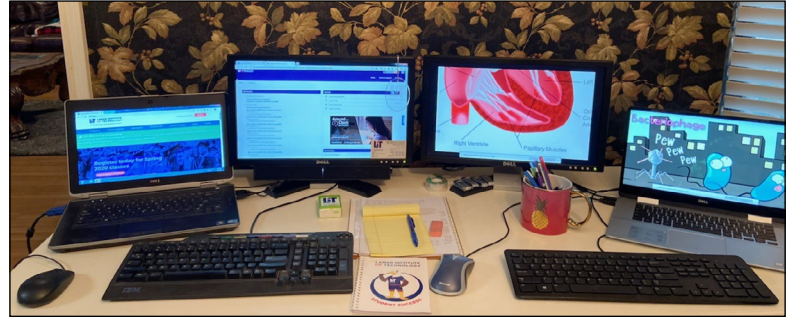
And LIT Family, thanks for all you do!

Most respectfully,

Lonnie L. Howard

Working from home

LIT instructor Dr. Connie Grass' approach to working remotely and helping others is not an anomaly. Though her four computer screens set-up may not be available to all employees, our faculty and staff have been using every resource available to provide the best education and customer service to students while working from home. Dr. Howard implemented a remote-working policy through the end of the Spring Semester, going beyond the federal, state and local mandates. We are all in this together. Please adhere to these helpful tips for continued success.



Dr. Connie Grass (Biological Sciences Remotely).

Remote Working Tips:

- **Communicate with your supervisor** – Work with your supervisor to get a remote work schedule in place. Communicate the need for any changes to the work schedule or time off.
- **Designate a work area in your home** – Teleworking can provide challenges in terms of distractions. To increase productivity and get into a routine, designate an area in your home that is specifically for work. This should preferably be away from a television.
- **Set and communicate daily tasks** – Check in with your supervisor as directed (email, phone, text message, etc.), listing daily tasks as goals to be completed by the end of the workday. Communicate with your team and supervisor when those tasks have been completed.
- **Be accessible** – During your designated work hours be accessible via email and/or your home and mobile phone.

Technology and Security:

If you need access to VPN check with your supervisor to receive instructions. If you need assistance with setting up VPN or remote access please email helpdesk@lit.edu or call (409) 839-2074 to secure a work order. Please see the attached IT safety guidelines for working remotely.

Responding to 1st Responders

on a Sunday within three hours



Hundreds of PPE were delivered to the Jefferson County Courthouse.

LIT responded in a moments notice on a Sunday afternoon to make sure first responders on the front lines had the equipment necessary to protect themselves from COVID-19. After receiving a call from community leader, Vernon Pierce, Dr. Howard reached out to Allied Health & Sciences Department Chair Allen Welch, requesting a coordinated effort for donations to Jefferson County's Emergency Management Center through the Jefferson County Emergency Relief Fund.

Within three hours, Welch rallied EMS Clinical Program Coordinator Clint Vannoy and Dental Hygiene Instructors Lisa Harrell and Dr. Kristina Mendoza to help inventory personal protective equipment (PPE) the county needed and hand-delivered the life-saving tools to be used at the Jack Brooks Regional Airport COVID test site.

April's Employee of the Month (All LIT Faculty & Staff)

Congratulations go out to our deserving employees—every single member of LIT's family—for exhibiting amazing spirit: an unwavering sense of camaraderie, resilience and flexibility during this historic and trying time.



Whether it was tirelessly gathering medical supplies for emergency relief (see story), or just managing to roll with the punches, 'your' efforts haven't gone unnoticed or unappreciated! Thanks for all you do!

April BIRTHDAYS

April 4, Weldon Jacobs

April 19, Renee Celeste

April 5, Tracy Spencer

April 21, Bonnie Cobb

April 8, Ira Wilsker

April 21, Tiffany Williams-Parker

April 11, Leigh Burks

April 12, Cheryl Biskey

April 27, Sharon Hughes