



**Necessity is the mother of invention.** It's a proverb that resonates with me on a daily basis as we recently moved our entire academic program online to ensure appropriate physical distancing in accordance with public health guidelines to limit the spread of SARS-CoV-2.

The appearance of this highly contagious respiratory virus is new to all of us. It was unexpected and it posed a very real danger to us all as infection spread and threatened to overwhelm the capacities of our hospitals and health systems. I am indebted to our faculty, staff, students, and the Upper Valley community members for how rapidly they responded to this public health crisis. Their actions have mitigated the predicted surge of COVID-19 patients in our area, and we are now developing plans to gradually renew our on-campus activities. I am most indebted to our frontline healthcare

providers who selflessly shoulder the responsibility for caring for COVID-19 patients.

What lessons have we learned? That our community responds in compelling fashion when called to action by a crisis.

Our faculty and staff are ingenious. Inspired by these events we have new research programs to develop reliable testing, advance new therapeutic strategies, develop vaccines, track patient outcomes in different healthcare systems, and evaluate the efficacy of the newly expanded use of telemedicine. We also have new curricular offerings adapted to remote learning platforms as well as a new course offering specifically related to COVID-19. Finally, our faculty and alumni are contributing their time and expertise to a series of public webinars to provide accessible education to everyone on different aspects of COVID-19.

Public health and medicine are intertwined. We are fortunate to have both medicine and public health programs under one umbrella in our school at Dartmouth. These events inspire us to further blur the boundaries between these disciplines to ensure the best healthspan for our populations.

Nobody is unaffected. Some members of our community have been infected, some have family members infected, and all of us have felt the impact of physical distancing. This virus unifies us as a people. Yet, paradoxically, the tangible impacts that each of us experience are quite individualized and we need to be especially compassionate with each other under these very stressful conditions.

Finally, we are resilient. In planning how to safely resume renewal of our on-campus activities in the context of this new virus, our overriding principle is to ensure the safety of our faculty, staff, students, and community as we contemplate next steps. We will emerge from these events with new appreciation for our connectedness as a community and with new and innovative research and education programs.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Duane A. Compton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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