@HOME WITH THE BAC

Dear BAC faculty and staff,

Humanity is being challenged by a virus. How we respond to the challenge will define who we are as a community.

By now you have learned of the recently released modeling of the infection scenarios by prominent scientists. It is now clear that the coming weeks and months will hit our communities hard. The unfolding human tragedy has already been knocking on the doors of our colleagues, students and friends. As a family of families, I know we will support our community by empathizing with those affected and extending to them whatever support we can. We need each other to lean on.

From the federal government forecasts and the road maps published by experts, we know the road to recovery is going to be long. We could be working under demanding circumstances for longer than six months and as much as a year.

I would like you to know that we have been closely following the forecasts, scenarios and expert guidance to determine our responses for summer, fall and beyond. Fortunately, the resources from federal and state levels have begun to flow and could help us weather the viral storm, but there are many uncertainties ahead. For the first time in my memory, the whole world including all higher education institutions, are joined by this shared experience.

I know that the first feeling to spring to mind in the face of the current threats may be fear. But, we, at the BAC are strong and resilient. I have been truly heartened by the speed and energy with which the entire community has come together to provide support for our students and each other. We have always challenged the conventional wisdom, stayed focused on our mission of diversity and inclusion, and embraced innovation well before anyone else, sometimes by decades. I have full confidence that as educators and designers we are uniquely positioned to provide lasting solutions to this crisis that not only benefit our students, but higher education in general. Only by believing in ourselves, embracing hope, thinking positively and responding with empathy can we emerge stronger from whatever challenges come our way. We are Boston strong and BAC resilient!

We truly are #InThisTogether under the Great Banyan Tree!

Stay well,
Dr. Mahesh Daas, President

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**Happy World Landscape Architecture Month!**

WLAM is established by the American Society of Landscape Architects and is a month-long international celebration of landscape architecture and designed public and private spaces. Learn how you can participate here! #WLAM2020 #LifeGrowsHere

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**Virtual Lecture by President Daas on April 2**

President Daas' lecture, “Being Human Being Robot: How Will We ______ Together?!” will now be held virtually via Zoom on April 2 at 6:00 PM. **This webinar is approved by the AIA for 1 HSW credit.** Please respond to the Zoom webinar registration email to request the credit. All are invited, so please help spread the word! Join the webinar here.

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**BAC Summer Classes Move Online**

Out of an abundance of caution and based on current Coronavirus developments, the BAC leadership has made the decision to continue online learning through Summer 2020. The BAC has made the pivot to online to ensure a superior student experience. An announcement will be made to the students in Monday's e-newsletter.

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**Reminder: Spring 2020 Commencement Postponed**

As previously announced, the commencement ceremony originally scheduled for Friday, May 22, 2020, including all related events, has been postponed until further notice. This truly difficult decision was made in response to the evolving status of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and at the recommendation of public health agencies.

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**Online Library Resources**

The BAC Library has composed a handy guide to some of the best remote resources available for faculty and students. Click here to check it out!

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**Dean Karen Nelson is Featured on Archinect**

Check out this article by Archinect highlighting Dean of Architecture Karen Nelson and the BAC's Online M.Arch program!

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**Yoga Time**

On Wednesday, 4/1 at 4:00 PM the BAC PAC will be having a yoga hour hosted by Kelsey Flynn. Grab your mat and get ready to stretch! Click here to join.
T-Pass Deductions
Deductions for May e-passes will not be coming out of next two payrolls. We will update more when the MBTA sends regulations regarding June passes.

Payments for Telehealth
Telehealth services will be of no change to employees until Dec 31, 2020.

Over-the-Counter Drugs and Menstrual Care Products
The restriction on the use of flexible spending account (FSA) for the purchase of over-the-counter (OTC) drugs and medicines. Effective for expenses incurred on or after January 1, 2020, consumers may use FSA to pay for OTC drugs without the need for a prescription. The same provision also adds menstrual care products to the list of OTC items for which FSA enrollees can use their funds tax-free. The OTC and menstrual care product measures do not have an expiration date - which is good news for health care spending account holders.

FSA Dependent Care
Employees who are enrolled in our dependent care FSA may stop their deductions temporarily while childcare centers are closed. To do so please email Deirdre Higgins.

BAC Thanks Those on the Frontlines
To our families, friends, and everyone working on the frontlines, thank you! We appreciate you.