Dear BAC Community,

We are forging ahead together!

Amid the pervasive hum of reopening and returning, I am calling upon our community to embrace more progressive language of forging ahead to a stronger future. Just as we never step in the same river twice, we never get to return to the past—life always moves forward.

Just this week, Governor Baker has rolled out a broad framework for a phased reopening of the Commonwealth. And, as disruptive as the transition from working on campus to working remotely, it was relatively simple compared to the challenges of restructuring how we interact when we return to our workplace. One thing is for sure, we are deliberative, inclusive, thorough, and strategic in thinking about taking full advantage of the flexibility offered by the ability to work from home while maintaining the strengths of on-campus work.

We have learned a great deal about ourselves through the challenges thrown at us by the virus. We have literally and figuratively gained a great deal—thanks to the disruption caused by this global pandemic. We have come together as a stronger and closer community. We are communicating better, guided by our values, and supporting each other with compassion and respect.

We put safety of our people first. We recognize there are many interconnected problems needing careful resolution—childcare, working spouses, caregiving needs, public transit vulnerabilities, social distancing, sanitation protocols, access for students, mental health, stewardship of resources and more!

As I stated before, flexibility and adaptability are the mantras for a successful advancement into realizing more effective and strategic ways of working. Over the next two weeks, we will engage with each of you as we craft the plan to advance beyond the stay-at-home times. Most importantly, we recognize this is a marathon, and, to that end, we are going to roll out a series of initiatives with the longer term—next two to three years—in mind, too.

We are forging ahead to a new world, a new way of interacting, and a new way of collaborating. As an institution consistently challenging the norms of an inequitable society, we do not operate within the framework of normality. In the spirit of blazing new trails, we are neither returning to a pre-pandemic normal nor moving toward a new normal. We are innovating how we serve our students as well as providing flexibility for faculty and staff.

Please let me know if you have any questions, concerns, and thoughts about the next phase of moving forward amid a pandemic.

Stay safe,
Dr. Mahesh Daas, President

A big shout-out to the entire School of Landscape Architecture! Thank you for all the work you do for the BAC. Your dedication does not go unnoticed! We appreciate each one of you.

Additional News + Resources:

CLOSED Monday for Memorial Day
Please remember the BAC is closed on Monday, May 25 in observance of Memorial Day.

Mark your calendars for BAC Talks!
We have turned our annual Spring Gala into an exciting virtual event, BAC Talks, featuring Thom Mayne as our keynote speaker! There will be several other thought leaders and panelists who will discuss topics of great relevance to the post-pandemic world. We will stream the event live on June 10th. Please stay tuned for more exciting details!
Help us celebrate our 2020 graduates!

It's not too late! Help us congratulate this year's graduates by recording a quick phone video of yourself sharing brief celebratory words. You can upload your video here.
The BAC is committed to helping our employees through this unusual time. We have negotiated with our dental company and our FSA provider to allow flexibility due to procedures being rescheduled. Please read notices below:

**Delta Dental Update:**

With dental offices being closed for all but emergency procedures, we recognize that you have not been able to make full use of your dental benefits. We have worked with Delta Dental of Massachusetts and we will be crediting back 30% of your June and July premiums.

Please see below the new rates for June and July:

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<th></th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Employee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+1 Family</td>
<td>$3.21</td>
<td>$48.71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Rates:</td>
<td>$19.29</td>
<td>$48.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Rates:</td>
<td>$3.21</td>
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IRS Notices Issue Relief Impacting Unused Flexible Spending Account Funds:

On May 12, 2020 the IRS issued Notice 2020-29 and Notice 2020-33. These announcements provide more relief affecting both Health Care and Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs). The FSA changes include:

- The BAC has amended their FSA plan to include an extension of the claims period for participants to apply unused contributions remaining in their Health Care or Dependent Care FSA to expenses incurred through December 31, 2020.
- Example: Health Care FSA plan year ends on June 30, 2020. An employee has a $1,300 balance that was not used between July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020 because their medical provider postponed a planned procedure. The employee can now claim the $1,300 against a claim incurred between July 1, 2020-December 31, 2020.

Access to Campus Instructions
If you need access to campus during this time, please refer to the return to campus guidelines outlined here.

OPEN ENROLLMENT June 1, 2020 – May 31, 2021 Benefit Plan Year

It is once again open enrollment time at the Boston Architectural College! This means that beginning May 4, 2020 and ending May 15, 2020, you will have the opportunity to select the combination of employee benefits offered by Boston Architectural College that best suits your needs and those of your family. Benefit changes will be effective June 1, 2020. Please review the information contained in this email carefully as this is your once in a year opportunity to make changes to your benefits without a qualifying event.

Enrollment for Medical, Dental, Vision and Voluntary Supplemental Life/AD&D is passive for 2020. This means unless you make a change you will maintain your current elections for these plans. For Medical and Dependent Care Flexible Spending (FSA) you must make an election for this plan year. Enrollment will take place electronically through Paycom.

MEDICAL PLAN – Tufts Health Plan: We are excited to share that for the second year in a row, we are able to continue offering lower than average premium increases (2% versus 8-10% seen for most employers) with no change to the current out-of-pocket maximums, deductibles and co-pays.

VISION INSURANCE – HUMANA: Boston Architectural College is pleased to announce we will continue to offer
May is Mental Health Awareness Month
Please remember to take care of yourself, stay healthy, and manage your work life balance! Check out our work life harmony tips here.

ACE Engage is currently free to use!
Check out free webinars by ACE Engage such as Enrollment Strategies and Tactics for the Global

voluntary vision coverage through Humana during the June 1, 2020 – May 31, 2021, plan year. There are no changes to rate or benefits for the third year in a row. With the Humana Vision plan you have access to both the Humana and EyeMed network providers. Employees pay 100% of the premium costs for Voluntary Vision.

**DENTAL INSURANCE – DELTA DENTAL:** Continuing with the trend of benefit and rate stability The BAC will continue to offer dental coverage through Delta Dental of Massachusetts during the June 1, 2020 – May 31, 2021, plan year. Again, The BAC is able to provide this benefit for the third year in a row with no changes to benefits or rates.

**FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS (MEDICAL AND DEPENDENT CARE FSA) – GROUP DYNAMIC:** Flexible Spending Accounts will continue to be administered by Group Dynamic. To participate you must make a new election each plan year. The IRS maximum contribution for Medical FSA in 2020 is $2,750. There is no change to the Dependent Care IRS maximum of $5,000 per household.

**SUPPLEMENTAL LIFE INSURANCE – USABLE:** Eligible employees have the option to purchase additional Life and AD&D insurance for yourself, spouse and/or children during this open enrollment period. Please see the USAble benefit summary for the Guarantee Issue Limits and review the USAble rate sheet. If you are newly eligible, you can purchase coverage up to the Guaranteed Issue Amount with no evidence of insurability (EOI). If you have previously declined Supplemental Life Insurance an Evidence of Insurability form will be required and coverage is subject to approval by the insurance carrier. If you have previously elected voluntary Life insurance you do not have to re-enroll and are able to increase your election by $10,000 during this enrollment period.

**BE ON THE LOOKOUT!**
For a special community building project coming to your mailbox soon!

May is Mental Health Awareness Month
Please remember to take care of yourself, stay healthy, and manage your work life balance! Check out our work life harmony tips here.

**Be Kind to Your Mind**
Tips to cope with stress during COVID-19
1. PAUSE. Breathe. Notice how you feel
2. TAKE BREAKS from COVID-19 content
3. MAKE TIME to sleep and exercise
4. REACH OUT and stay connected
5. SEEK HELP if overwhelmed or unsafe

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Landscape Architecture is Sponsoring Virtual Watercolor Workshops this Summer

Open to all students, staff and faculty free of charge. Participants will have to provide their own materials and a list will be circulated in advance. While they do not carry any credit, the workshops are intended to be academic (and fun!) events. Each workshop will consist of two 90-minute sessions on June 16 + 23 and July 8 + 15 from 5:30 - 7:00 pm. Please contact Scott Fulford if you're interested.

MBTA Passes

Please note – for those of you who have received your MBTA or Commuter Rail passes through the BAC, you will need to alert HR when you are ready to return to order a new pass. If you currently have a pass in your possession it will no longer be valid. If you need a pass once we return to campus, please contact HR directly to get a new pass and they will set your payroll deductions.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Resources

Click here to review some of the resources available to you through our EAP!

Join our BAC Support Group

If you're a parent or caretaker, we invite you to join our Parent Support Group every Thursday at 8:30 PM via Zoom! This is open to faculty, staff, and students.

Spreading Kindness During COVID-19

A 10-year-old girl has sent more than 1,500 art kits to kids in foster care and homeless shelters during the coronavirus pandemic. Read about it here!
Stay updated with the BAC’s COVID-19 Webpage
As always, please visit our COVID-19 page for the latest information. If you have questions, please direct them to emergencymanagement@the-bac.edu. You can also follow us on Twitter @TheBACBoston for up-to-date and relevant information.