



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BLUEFIELD COLLEGE STUDENT TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

BLUEFIELD, VA – Bluefield College leadership has been notified that a Bluefield College student has tested positive for COVID-19. The student has been home, outside of Southwest Virginia, since Thursday, March 12, 2020. The student was tested by the student’s physician earlier this week. Bluefield College immediately notified the Tazewell County Health Department. Their staff has begun a tracing protocol to track the student’s movements while on our campus and determine others who could have come in contact with the student. It is important to note that this is a student different from earlier news reports of a student being tested.

The Tazewell County Health Department/Cumberland Plateau Health District is working in cooperation with Bluefield College and other health districts to investigate any potential exposures in the area to a confirmed case of coronavirus covid-19. While the health department does not comment on individual cases, the health department will notify any close contacts of the case to provide instructions on monitoring their health and preventing spread of the illness to others. Bluefield College will continue to follow the guidance of health officials from the Tazewell County Health Department and Virginia Department of Health. The Tazewell County Health Department will be releasing a statement in addition to this release for more information. Bluefield College will continue to sanitize campus each day, as it has since the onset of the pandemic. Students remaining on campus, and the entire campus community, are encouraged to continue these best practices:

Social distancing: Stay out of places with groups of people, avoid large events, and keep a distance of six-feet between you and anyone else when possible. Only go out for essential items. Please follow guidelines put in place by Governor Northam and the Commonwealth of Virginia (or your state’s guidelines if you are outside of the Commonwealth). Continue to follow Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines as well.

Self-monitoring: If you feel symptomatic, check for a fever by taking your temperature twice a day. Be aware of any developing cough or difficulty breathing. Continue practicing social distancing and stay home. If you develop a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing while self-monitoring, call your health care provider for further instructions. Do not immediately go to the hospital or urgent care. Your health care provider will want to determine your symptoms before you enter a public space.

Self-quarantine: If you know you have been exposed or have likely been exposed to COVID-19 but do not yet have symptoms, you should self-quarantine. This means separating yourself from others (even within the same household) to prevent the spread of the virus at the direction of your health care provider.

If you are sick: If you have any symptoms, whether you have officially been tested for COVID-19 or not, the CDC offers a number of recommendations to help stop the community spread of COVID-19 and let you know when it's safe to stop isolation and resume normal activities. You can find those instructions here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Bluefield College will continue to keep our community informed by sharing information by press releases, campus e-mails, and by updating our webpage: www.bluefield.edu/covid-19. Up-to-date information on Virginia coronavirus cases can also be found from the Virginia Department of Health at: www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus. Please continue to look at these sources for the most up-to-date and accurate information.

For more information, please contact Joshua Cline, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, at 304.960.9195 or jcline@bluefield.edu.

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