Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Greetings from New Mexico,

As always, I hope this message finds you well wherever you are.

I had the opportunity to participate in four Zoom calls this past week with parents of current students and parents of admitted students. As virtual town halls, the calls offered a short

presentation followed by about 45 minutes for questions and were well attended. It was heartwarming to see so many eager parents all listening intently to our developing plans for next year. And it was humbling to join so many families in their homes, recognizing their commitment to our mission and work. It was just what I needed: a reminder that the work we are all doing in relative isolation these days has a significant impact on families and communities around the world. I'm so grateful to those who took the time to share questions, concerns, and encouragement. I'm also grateful to our staff members who joined me in offering as much

transparency as possible as we work through the end of this year and our plans for next. Thank you!

Looking back over the past week and ahead to the next few, I have several items I'd like to highlight:

- Our residential staff and counselors continue to check in on our students as they need support and guidance. This remains our highest priority. The students have all adjusted to the new normal of distance learning while managing time zones and video instruction.
- Over the weekend, second-year students participated in our annual Second-Year Retreat, an opportunity for second-years to share and to hear from alumni and staff as they look to transition to their lifelong relationship with UWC-USA and the movement.
- Over the next week our second-year students will have their last day of class, their second-year dinner (virtual), and a virtual ExEd portfolio presentation.
- First-year students, on the other hand, have academic obligations that last until May 26 including classes, ExEd story projects, and other reflections.
- Our Constructive Engagement of Conflict (CEC) Program will be hosting monthly online sessions exploring topics relevant to conflict and peacemaking. If you would like to suggest a topic for us to explore, please complete this form.
- UWC-USA is participating in #GivingTuesdayNow, a new global day of giving and unity. Gifts to UWC-USA through this effort will not only support our annual fund, but will also help to support our ongoing efforts in the community. While the official day is May 5, everyone is welcome to give beginning now!
- As discussed in our town hall meeting with current parents and students, we are meeting with the UWC-USA Board of Trustees to explore how we will be handling

room and board refunds (for second-year students) and credits for next year (for first-year students).

- For families of students who will be joining us for the 2020/21 school year, we are communicating regularly and moving them through the usual process even while emphasizing the need for flexibility as the what and how of next year becomes more clear.
- Our board and leadership team are now focused on planning for next year. We will begin sharing our work with you next week.

As I reflect on it, the town hall model for our parent sessions was a perfect fit for what we were aiming to do. At a town hall the community's needs are placed above the individual's, leaders are held to account for their decisions, and anyone can ask questions while contributing to the direction the community is heading. We're all pulling in the same direction with the same goals in mind. We're all seeking the facts that will inform our decisions in a time when facts are evolving. I can think of no other community I would want to be working with right now than the UWC community of parents, faculty, staff, friends, volunteers and alumni. Our dedication to our students - their well being and education - is unwavering. Together we will find our way forward.

Thank you again for your encouragement and support over the past weeks, and for your partnership as we move forward.

My very best,

Victoria