

COVID-19 Update - April 16, 2020

Hi all-

Slow news day today, so a quick update tonight.

COVID-19 Testing Update: We've submitted 26 samples and all 26 have returned NEGATIVE. We're still 6 for 6 on negative test results in Eagle Pass, Texas. On the staff front, we've had 42 staff who have been tested for COVID-19. 36 have tested NEGATIVE, 4 tests are pending, and 2 were positive. We've had no new cases in our staff since the two that were previously announced.

The Governor alluded to it in his press conference yesterday, and I think it's worth bringing up again. For as much as people may want to return to "normal," we all should be preparing for a new, different normal. It is unrealistic, and frankly unsafe, to think the stay home order will be lifted and life will go right back to how it was two months ago. When things re-open, and they will re-open, it's going to be different. The same is true for us and how we'll conduct our work moving forward. It will be different.

Once we got past the initial response, I've tried to keep an inventory of the things I'm learning as I go. I'd like to share one or two with you.

I've been telecommuting more, and I learned my inability to regularly work out or maintain any sort of regular commitment to physical fitness had NOTHING to do with how much I was traveling or how many hours I was spending away from the house. It might have a little more to do with will power and general determination. I still don't have either one of those where physical fitness is concerned -- now I know that for sure. In other news, I also eat more when I work from home, so that's super helpful.

Telecommuting has been a learning experience for me professionally, and it also highlights how others may be experiencing it differently. Some might find the time and space alone energizing, while others may find it difficult to focus or almost feel drained by the lack of socialization. An even larger group probably enjoys the occasional reprieve from me. Still, it would be a mistake to not use this time and opportunity to figure out how to stay connected and productive in ways that make us better.

I've also learned that the old adage, "Crisis doesn't build character. It reveals it!" is very, very true. If you're not feeling a little bit scared, anxious or uncertain right now, you're probably not human. I know I feel it. And that's what makes me so moved by the character this agency has shown through this crisis. You keep showing up. You keep finding ways to continue our work, albeit in different ways. And you keep making me so incredibly proud.

I'll check in again tomorrow. Until then, take care of yourself!

Thanks-
Josh