Gov. Bill Lee signs safer at home order for Tennessee

Tennessee Governor Bill Lee will sign Executive Order 23 requiring that Tennesseans stay home unless they are carrying out essential activities as data shows an increase in citizen movement across the state.

“Over the last few weeks, we have seen decreases in movement around the state as Tennesseans socially distance and stay at home,” said Gov. Lee. “However, in recent days we have seen data indicating that movement may be increasing and we must get these numbers trending back down. I have updated my previous executive order to clearly require that Tennesseans stay at home unless they are carrying out essential activities.”

Data from the Tennessee Department of Transportation analyzed traffic patterns for March 2020.

While safer at home measures and further restrictions on businesses showed a steep drop-off in vehicle movement from March 13-29, data beginning on March 30 indicates travel is trending upwards, again.

The Administration also analyzed data from Unacast to understand cell phone mobility and determine movement trends among people.

Unacast indicates the movement of Tennesseans is trending toward pre-COVID-19 levels. “The month of April stands to be an extremely tough time for our state as we face the potential for a surge in COVID-19 cases,” said Lee. “Every Tennessean must take this seriously, remain at home and ensure we save lives.”

The executive order remains in effect until April 14, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver has asked all employees to comply with the safer at home order and to only be on campus if it is absolutely necessary. Any employee remaining on campus must have the essential service provider ID printed by the Department of Public Safety.

Students remaining on campus will still have meal service provided during the stay at home order.

In compliance with the order, the Paul Meek Library has closed. The 24/7 computer lab will still be open to students remaining on campus.

For more information concerning UT Martin’s COVID-19 response plan, visit utm.edu/coronavirus.

Winters named interim executive director of research, outreach and economic development

Dr. Todd Winters, dean of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, has been appointed interim executive director of research, outreach and economic development at UT Martin, effective April 1.

Winters will be responsible for working with the UT System’s Office of Government Relations and Advocacy in support of regional and state relationships; oversight and compliance of university-sponsored programs and grants; the promotion and coordination of outreach activities including non-degree programs; and will report directly to UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver.

“We are very excited to have someone of his experience in seeking grants and overseeing undergraduate research in this role,” said Carver. “Dean Winters is one of the most active members on campus in terms of seeking external funding and writing grants, so in this interim role, it will be great to have someone with his background and knowledge.”

Winters will replace Dr. Charley Deal who is the newly appointed vice chancellor for university advancement. Deal has served as the executive director of research, outreach and economic development since February 2019 and will assume his new responsibilities as vice chancellor April 1.

“Dr. Deal and staff have done a wonderful job of building the ROED office. We hope to continue growing UT Martin’s footprint as an economic engine for the region and continue to engage the community adjusting to their needs as they recover.

Continued on page 2
YoUTMs

“Singing the Lord’s Song in a Strange Land” in 2011. Giles shared stories from Lowery’s life, detailing his perseverance and commitment to fighting for equality for African Americans and the opposition he faced daily because of his work. Giles says the most important lesson she ever learned from Lowery is that it doesn’t matter how old you are, you are always capable of doing what is right and fighting for justice.

“You’re never too old to have an effect... That’s the lesson I learned from him: not to stop fighting, not to stop trying to speak up for those who can’t speak up,” said Giles. “Even though he was older, he fought up until the end for people who suffered from injustice. I hope that’s what people remember about him.”

Giles’ interview aired on “Last Word” Friday, April 3, and can be heard at https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m000gvml.

When his class piano students began struggling with the shift to online class because of a lack of access to physical keyboards, Charles Lewis, lecturer of music, began searching for solutions to ease the transition. Lewis was able to purchase five keyboards from Facebook marketplace with his own money and personally delivered the keyboards to his students’ houses across West and Middle Tennessee.

“That’s what we do as teachers... it’s what we do for our students. It’s UT Martin,” said Lewis.

Lewis believes that each of his students deserves the chance to do well in his class despite the shift to go online and that it was his responsibility to ensure they have that chance. He is using this experience to readjust how he works with students and to be more attentive to the struggles students have.

“At the end of the day, I have to feel good about what I have done in order to help these students be successful and if I haven’t gone the extra mile, I haven’t done my job.”

#### UT Martin nursing program ranked ‘2020 Best RN Program’

The UT Martin Department of Nursing has earned the rank of “2020 Best RN Program in Tennessee” by RegisteredNursing.org, a nursing advocacy organization. UT Martin’s nursing program ranked No. 1 of 44 other college nursing programs in Tennessee.

The colleges were assessed on multiple factors that determine how well a program supports students toward licensure and future careers, which is calculated by a five-year average of the program’s first-time NCLEX-RN pass-rates weighted by each year. UT Martin scored a 98.68 out of 100 on the nursing advocacy organization’s criteria test.

UT Martin consistently produces high pass rates on the NCLEX-RN that are above state and national averages and shares this achievement with several other nursing programs across the state, according to Dr. Mary Radford, chair of the Department of Nursing.

“The ranking reflects the hard work UTM Nursing faculty put into ensuring students are ready to pass the licensure exam and to enter the workforce as competent registered nurses. We regularly evaluate and re-evaluate our curriculum to be sure it reflects the field of modern nursing and success in the field from graduation forward,” said Radford.

According to registerednursing.org, the UT Martin nursing department prepares its graduates with critical thinking and effective communication skills.

“We are very proud of our graduates and the work they put into preparing for the licensure exam. It is a very intimidating, high-stakes test that puts a lot of pressure on them, so diligence in preparing is key, and they always show us their persistence and determination in that,” Radford said.

#### Continued from page 1

from this current pandemic. We also want to continue to grow our research and scholarly activities at the university, which in turn will positively impact the region, nation and earth as a whole,” said Winters.

Winters began his career at UT Martin in 2013 and teaches courses in animal genetics and reproduction, and lectures in nutritional endocrinology, agricultural biotechnology and dairy management. As college dean, Winters has gained experience in outreach and economic development in rural communities and has a strong research background in both grantsmanship and scholarly activity.

“I’m dedicated to serving UT Martin and West Tennessee to the best of my abilities. I believe I have the passion, knowledge and work ethic to do a good job,” said Winters.

For more information, contact the Office of Research, Outreach and Economic Development at 731-881-7015.
UT Martin postpones SOAR, Transfer orientation

UT Martin has postponed the Summer Orientation and Registration (SOAR) and Transfer Orientation sessions as a precautionary measure related to COVID-19. The first SOAR dates, originally planned for May 18 and 20, have been rescheduled for June 22 and 24, respectively. SOAR, previously seven sessions, will be consolidated into five sessions on the following dates: June 22 and 24, July 10 and 28 and Aug. 7. The SOAR sessions originally scheduled for June 5 and 19 have also been combined with the July 10 SOAR. Transfer Orientation will be June 23 and July 16.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions is communicating any changes to upcoming UT Martin students as updates are available through email, text and virtual appointments with admissions counselors. While there are no reported cases of COVID-19 in Martin currently, UT Martin is conducting all courses online and has canceled all prospective student tours through April. Admissions is planning alternative SOAR sessions in case conditions warrant beyond the selected SOAR dates.

For more information, contact admissions at 731-881-7020.

Welcome New Employees

• Krista Dawn Taylor is a testing administrative specialist at the testing services office.
• Ronne Sue Jones is a team leader of Support Services in the Paul Meek Library.
• Lindsey Brewer is a home visitor coordinator in the Child and Family Grant programs.

This section is used to welcome new faculty and staff members as the information becomes available from the Office of Human Resources.

Latimer Engineering and Science Building construction

Construction has begun for the Latimer Engineering and Science Building. Visit utm.edu/about/webcams to watch the livestream construction updates from the Humanities Building.

Is your department hosting an online event to engage students, faculty and community members during the remainder of the semester? Please submit your event details to addenda@utm.edu to be included on the homepage and Addenda calendar.

You Tell Me

• Question – One of the best features of UT Martin is the abundance of trees. Why are trees across campus being cut down?

• Answer – According to Chris Virgin, head groundskeeper, the trees that are being cut down around campus are dying from Bacterial Leaf Scorch, an untreatable disease that mostly effects Pin Oak and Sycamore trees. Many of the trees being cut down are in parking lot areas where the decomposing trees are damaging cars as they continue to drop dead branches. As UT Martin is a certified arboretum, the trees will be replaced with less susceptible species to the disease to maintain the certification. An additional 50 trees will be planted on campus each year to replace those lost.

Submit your questions anonymously to the Suggestion Box link at www.utm.edu/suggestionbox.