May Alumni and August Graduates:

We announced last week that we would not be able to have an August commencement ceremony due to social distancing limitations of the venue we use for our ceremonies, the United Supermarkets Arena in Lubbock. We made that same decision in May for the same reasons. After the announcement, we received communications from some of the Traditional BSN graduates expressing their disappointment and offering suggestions for alternative solutions to address the issues surrounding safely staging the event. Some of those ideas were very helpful, such as exploring other options, including properties besides Texas Tech facilities.

We communicated that we would explore other possible venues for an August commencement ceremony that could accommodate our graduates and guests safely, maintaining the physical distancing necessary to provide protection for all. We have now done so and, unfortunately, these options did not work out to be either appropriate or available for our use.

As a Health Sciences Center, our primary concern always is to do no harm, and to promote health and safety for all. This is especially relevant when considering the gathering of hundreds of people during a global pandemic.

As a result, all of the schools within the TTUHSC, including the Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy, Health Professions and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences are joining with the School of Nursing and are not holding August graduation events. Our President, Dr. Lori Rice-Spearman, and all five Deans of the HSC schools have agreed that this is the appropriate decision. In addition, Texas Tech University has also announced today that there will be no August commencement ceremonies this year for the same reasons that we concluded.

We understand that many of you will be disappointed but I hope you will understand that health and safety for all is our greatest concern. We are so very proud of each and every one of you and seeing the joy on your faces at graduation and sharing the event with you and your families and friends is one of the rewards we anticipate and cherish. We share your regret that we had to miss that event in May, and now also in August.

As we did for the May graduates, there will be other ways we will celebrate your great achievement and we will be in touch soon to share more.

Congratulations to each of you.

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