For Immediate Release

WVU students test positive for COVID-19

MORGANTOWN, WV (April 8, 2020) — Monongalia County Health Department and West Virginia University were notified today, April 8, that more than a dozen WVU students have tested positive for COVID-19 (novel coronavirus).

Although investigations and contact tracing are ongoing, it is believed the students returned to private, off-campus residences upon returning to Morgantown. As a reminder, WVU campuses have been closed and access to buildings has been unavailable since March 20, with limited exceptions. There is no indication that the students have been on campus.

MCHD and WVU have been working in partnership to contain spread of this virus. Local health officials are quickly working to retrace affected students’ movements, and outreach is being made to those with whom the students may have been in close contact.

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19 are encouraged to contact WVU’s Office of Student Life at 304-293-5611 so that the university can best support the students if they are presenting with symptoms and to ensure our community is safe.

“We cannot reiterate enough that students need to be taking this virus seriously and follow all of executive orders issued by Gov. Jim Justice as well as health precaution guidelines outlined by our local health officials,” Dean of Students Corey Farris said. “To not do so is putting not only your fellow students’ health at risk, but the health and well-being of our entire Morgantown community.”

Gov. Justice has ordered that:

• Groups be limited to a maximum of five people;
• Citizens stay home, only leaving for essential needs (i.e., grocery shopping and medical needs).

• Citizens continue to practice good handwashing and other hygienic measures.

WVU’s campuses closed on March 20 and remain closed. The university has maximized the number of employees who are working from home, and alternative instruction for students began Monday, March 30.

“The most important thing we can do at this time as a community is social distance,” said Dr. Lee B. Smith, MCHD executive director and county health officer. “Leave your home only for essential needs, and when you do, take the proper precautions by wearing a mask and staying 6 feet apart from others.”

If you think you have been exposed or are exhibiting symptoms, call first before seeking medical care. You can contact the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources hotline at (800) 887-4304, which is available 24 hours, seven days a week. You also can call your physician or call WVU Medicine line at (304) 598-6000 (Option 4).

For additional information, visit https://coronavirus.wvu.edu/ or monchd.org/covid-19.html.

For more information about COVID-19, including links to the websites of the DHHR, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as local updates, go to monchd.org/covid-19.html. Also get updates @wvmchd on Facebook and Twitter and wvmchd on Instagram.