

## **Conference Call on July 7, 2020, with Westmont President Gayle D. Beebe and the Executive Team**

It's wonderful to be with you. Thank you for dialing in. We anticipate communicating where we are in the racial conversation on campus. We also want to give you an update on all the plans for repopulating the college as we prepare to launch the fall semester. We'll spend some time responding to questions, and then we'll pray.

I want to begin by highlighting some of the great influences on my own life. I come from a Quaker background and upbringing, which remains an influence in my life. I'm a minister in the Friends Church, and even though we haven't fellowshiped in a Friends Church for 20 years, it was the most formative influence on my own understanding of my life with Christ. Martin Luther King Jr. was a hero to Quakers, who were one of the groups that joined with him in the civil rights movement. The Quakers published his letter from the Birmingham Jail, and they funded the Poor People's Campaign. They also underwrote his trip to India, where he connected with some of the great places and artifacts from the life of Mahatma Gandhi. When I think about Martin Luther King Jr., I consider how he lived his faith in a way that inspired millions of people worldwide, especially those trying to follow the life of Christ and make a difference.

I've learned recently that there's a great effort to try and understand how best to appropriate people from the past who've influenced us—and how we can bring that into the present. I hope that as a college community, we'll retain a posture of continuing to learn, continuing to take in new information, and to change and adjust as we learn new things. I've had the opportunity to reconnect with a Black alumnus, and I initially called him an African American, the phrase I'd used for much of my adult life. But when I stopped and asked, "What do you prefer?" He said, "I'm actually not of African ancestry." He said he prefers to be called Black. That was a teachable moment for me.

As we go forward, I want to reach out to our alums of various backgrounds and ethnicities and begin to understand both their experience at Westmont and how we can do a better job as we move forward. When I think about Martin Luther King Jr., I recall great individuals who've embodied the Christian faith. He is certainly a martyr, one who died for his beliefs, but he lived such an amazing, inspirational life. He gave a unique spin to the phrase: "What is the way in which a Christian should live their life?" He said, "The responsible Christian is one who has the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other." He meant it was our responsibility to integrate the great experiences of life with the biblical testimony. It was a call to consider how we bring our faith into contemporary society in a way that really counts.

My own discipline, historical theology and philosophy of religion, has wrestled with this from a philosophical and theological point of view. One of my favorite thinkers is Jaroslav Pelikan, who wrote the landmark study "Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture." This book identifies the 18 dominant ways Christ has been depicted throughout the 2,000-year history of the church, and it helps us understand there's a timeless aspect to Christ

and a time-bound form presented in the culture of various communities around the world. I think this is an important part of the conversation for us.

At Westmont, I think we must take seriously how we can develop a greater capacity to listen, including how we listen to the most aggrieved members of our community. I want this to be something we do to the best of our capacity, to develop an empathetic orientation, a capacity to feel what others have experienced.

I mentioned Pelikan's work because the image of Jesus in the stained glass window in the Nancy Voskuyl Memorial Prayer Chapel has been one of the key questions raised. The conversation around the window has prompted us to begin taking a fresh approach not only to this sacred space but to all spaces on campus. Conversations are underway and will continue into the coming academic year to understand why the chapel was built and what we need to do moving forward. Many of you already know the chapel honors Nancy Voskuyl, who was the daughter of Roger Voskuyl, president of Westmont at the time. She was 19 years old and was tragically killed in a car accident while returning to campus after lunch in December 1959. Lisa DeBoer, professor of the history of art and chair of the Art Department, has provided a wonderful history that reflects the original purpose and design of the chapel, which you can find on our website.

Because of my own background and discipline, I was especially curious about why the chapel had been constructed and the meaning behind its design. There's some wonderful history here. But as the conversation has continued—and as we've recognized some of the complexity of our contemporary moment—we've wanted to make some changes and begin the process of expanding the conversation and the repertoire of images in the chapel. Dr. DeBoer has crafted a wonderful process and approach that we'll take this year outlined in her [document posted to our website](#). She has broken the conversation down into four categories that we'll consider and discuss before crafting new images that will become part of the chapel. We've been in conversation with the Voskuyl family, with Nancy's two surviving sisters, Jane and Ruth, and they're supportive of the approach and the process we're taking. The four categories Dr. DeBoer has identified include: 1) Jesus through the centuries, the 2,000-year history of the church and its depiction of Christ; 2) How we understand the church year through images; 3) The church around the world or global Christianity; and 4) The church at worship. These are just preliminary; there's a lot of work to do, but I think this will be an exciting conversation with some deliberate outcomes planned at the end.

Second, I want to amplify the importance of curricular innovations. Under the leadership of Provost Mark Sargent, appropriate faculty committees have been meeting via Zoom and have approved a revitalized and repurposed ethnic studies minor. I think this is a wonderful rekindling of something that's been at the heart of Westmont for many years. Several developments make this possible, including the ongoing hiring of persons of color on the faculty who are expanding and broadening our curriculum. Across the spectrum, professors from all disciplines are thinking anew about what it means to approach their discipline with fresh eyes, attentive ears and curious

spirits. I hope the full implications of this effort will be inspirational for the college. There's so many good examples, including the impressive work of Professor John Blondell in our Theatre Arts department. I encourage you to look at his work (among many others) as he seeks to innovate his curriculum as part of this broader initiative.

Another initiative is college-wide training in implicit bias. This concept brings to light the fact that we all carry subconscious prejudice, which we develop without even realizing it. We carry this prejudice toward other individuals and groups, people who are different from us, people who live life and think about life differently than we do. We're often ignorant of our own implicit bias. Thankfully, we have wonderful resources within our own community, including Profesor Carmel Saad. Dr. Saad is a social psychologist and the daughter of Egyptian immigrants who left Egypt fleeing religious persecution. Her specialty includes teaching about implicit bias, and she has developed a national following. She is an amazing teacher, and she's going to take us through five sessions in the fall and five sessions in the spring to help us understand implicit bias, take a broader view of diversity, understand equity, learn how to be committed to inclusion, and discover what it means to develop intercultural competence. I look forward to the impact she can make on us. One of the things I love about her style is her willingness to be self-deprecating. She sprinkles a lot of personal stories and experiences with evidence-based studies that illustrate her points and show that we can be tested for implicit bias. We all have it, we subconsciously pick up signals from the culture, and we can't get to work on the subconscious messages until we've brought them to light.

Another initiative will be considering how we can continue to hire a more diverse faculty. During my 14 years at Westmont, we've brought in 58 new professors, often hiring as people left or retired, but also for new program initiatives. Of the 58 professors, 35 are women, 23 are men, and 17 are persons of color. Eighty-five percent of them have stayed. A variety of people get involved in hiring faculty, including myself. The provost leads the search, and the relevant department chairs and appropriate faculty members serve on the search committees. There's a full vetting, so this doesn't happen quickly. But the fact that we've been able to diversify the faculty shows a multiyear commitment to this as a priority, and it will continue. I want to amplify our focus on diversity, global engagement and intercultural competency in recruiting students. We've also been deliberately working at this the entire time I've been here, and it predates me. We could not hire the faculty, we could not recruit the students without a great foundation. In the past 14 years, the diversity of the student body has increased from a little under 30 percent to a little more than 45 percent. This has taken time, effort and a significant increase in scholarships and money. I so often think we overestimate what we can get done in one year and underestimate what we can get done in 10. We recognize we still have a long way to go, but we have made some important and impressive progress.

We also want to expand our access to resources. I'm delighted with the hiring of Blake Thomas as he begins to settle in as interim director of intercultural programs (ICP). I'm also pleased that Carol Houston, an African American pastor, a Black pastor, from South Central LA

will join us. She serves on our Board of Trustees and has agreed to come to campus once a week to work on issues of diversity, global engagement and intercultural competence and to advise me as we work our way through this. She has an amazing life story and an amazing faith story. She has served as a pastor for many years at a church in South Central LA, and I value both her friendship and her spiritual guidance.

I encourage you to reach out for other resources; here are some I've found especially important. Dr. Mark Strong, the pastor of Lifechange Church in Portland, produced a sermon in which a Black pastor addresses the white community with a powerful message from the book of Job. Darryl Williamson, the senior pastor at Living Faith Bible Fellowship in Tampa, is another resource. A new friend of the college, Dr. Marcus "Goodie" Goodloe from Way Church in LA, is a Martin Luther King Jr. scholar who will come to campus later this year. I've already mentioned Carol Houston, pastor of Unspeakable Joy Church in South Central. Bishop Kenneth Ulmer of Water of Life Community Church in Fontana is another person to listen to. Their messages apply Scripture and help us think through our biblical faith as we confront a complex, difficult and challenging social situation. I appreciate the leadership of these people as we think together about how we can make headway on these big issues. We've also retained David Bailey, the founder and head of Arrabon, an organization that works with various churches, colleges, universities and other agencies as well as for-profit companies to build cultural understanding and work across all kinds of racial and ethnic boundaries. I appreciate that David—a new friend of the college—works to engage us at a level that builds trust and helps lower barriers of suspicion between different groups.

Emmanuel Acho, a former NFL player, has started a podcast, "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man." He provides clear definitions of terms like white privilege. He went to University of Texas at Austin and has returned to Austin and made it his home base. A more controversial book, "White Fragility" by Dr. Robin DiAngelo, is excellent and gives a ton of great information but it also makes some highly controversial suggestions, conclusions and observations. It will help us understand the moment better. Later this fall, we'll host a seminar on campus with three people responsible for law enforcement in Santa Barbara County: District Attorney Joyce Dudley, Chief of Police Lori Luhnnow, and Sheriff Bill Brown. I personally have high regard for all three of these individuals and think they've been incredibly helpful not only in this moment, but in developing some of the most progressive policies in law enforcement. We can have constructive engagement without huge concerns about the integrity and ethics of individuals in law enforcement. I'm grateful for them.

As we move forward—or before we move forward—I want to emphasize how important this conversation is to us. All parts of the college community will be involved in it. I hope that throughout the year that we can exercise patience and forbearance to one another as we learn to live together with difference, respect difference, and make significant headway on such a critical issue. Before we go on, I'd like to stop and pray for this moment in the life of the college.

Gracious Lord and God, we give you thanks for all that is occurring, that it can bring to the surface the many ways in which we've neglected or overlooked problems that are a part of our life and our society. Westmont is an important part of this conversation. And now help each one of us who plays a role at Westmont to play our role well and to be able to bear with one another, to express forbearance in a way that actually encourages conversation and cultivates meaning. We pray that you'll guide us during this moment and that we can look back on this time as a turning point in the life and thought of the college and one that produced great fruit. We pray these things in your Son, Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

Now we'll address COVID-19 and how we're planning to respond. We're in the process of preparing for the August opening with new students arriving August 27. The provost and each vice president will go through their plans and give you a brief overview of a 150-page planning document developed by 150 people serving on 50 different committees and subcommittees. We'll submit it to the county public health official.

We'll officially open for students Thursday, August 27. Student leaders and athletes will return earlier than that. We'll communicate some testing protocols tonight. We've got to be clear about access to campus; we're going to go through all the plans for housing, classrooms, dining commons, and so on. We need to be mindful. We believe a vaccine is on the way, so we've got to figure out how to get through fall semester. It will require our best effort, our best discipline, to make it through fall semester, but I think we can have a glorious spring. I hope we'll keep that in mind as we embrace the plan for fall. The audio recording of this call is posted on our website, and some of the information appears in the upcoming issue of the Westmont magazine you should receive late this month.

**Now Mark Sargent, our provost, will talk about our academic program.**

I'm going to highlight some of the planning that's gone into our academic program for the fall as well as the athletic program. I want to assure you that the academic program will strictly adhere to the CDC guidelines for physical distancing. We will make sure there is sufficient space in classrooms for students to spread out to minimize the risk of transmission. That has required us to assign many courses to new spaces. We'll even be using some larger spaces like the gym and Page Multipurpose Room. Some professors will use outside spaces for some of their class sessions. We'll have a small group of classes, fewer than 30, that will be offered entirely online. Another 15 or 20 will be offered in some kind of hybrid form with half the class attending one day and the other half participating remotely, and then they reverse that. The hybrid approach will also be used in some of the labs, so that fewer students will be in the lab at one time. The full list of our courses, including their new room assignments and their particular modality—whether they're going to be online or hybrid or as usual—is going to be posted on Webadvisor by noon on July 15. We encourage you to check after noon on July 15 to see the up-to-date information. Faculty, by the way, will receive an email from the provost's office this week with additional information about our plan. If you check the schedule on

Webadvisor after July 15, you'll see we're adding an additional five minutes between classes in the mornings and in the early afternoons so there's more time for cleaning and more time for transit between classes.

Our approach to teaching in the fall will be as usual. We're going to continue to prioritize the relational, residential education that's core to our mission as a Christian liberal arts college. As we prioritize the relational aspects of our educational philosophy, we'll be especially mindful of the additional challenges our students are facing. We're going to take great care to make sure that students who need to quarantine for any reason will not lose ground in their ability to make progress in class. We'll maintain a commitment to providing sufficient office hours through various means so that students have access to faculty, and we'll be constantly updating the care team about students who may be struggling or need additional help. New students will participate in advising sessions; some initial ones will be individual and remote with some larger, department group sessions as well.

The Westmont Downtown and Westmont in San Francisco programs will proceed as scheduled, although those programs have been adapted to limit students' interaction with the surrounding city. We'll make a decision about Westmont in Jerusalem by October 1 and decide about Mayterm international programs by mid-year.

Most of our internships in the fall will be handled remotely, and our Office of Institutional Resilience will review those where students participate on site.

We're planning for music courses that will observe the recommended standards of six feet apart for all students who are working with instruments and 14 feet for voice. A few of our private lessons will be conducted remotely. We're planning for live-streaming and prerecorded streaming concerts for the fall season, and we'll have a mixture of some professionally produced presentations as well as some we'll do here on campus. Some theater productions will be done on film as well as various remote techniques.

We're taking great care in our library to make sure there's appropriate space between those who use carrels. Chairs and tables will be moved apart, several pieces of furniture will be removed, and the books that are returned will be quarantined to make sure we minimize the risk of infection. Our Office of Disability Services, our Writers' Corner, and many of the services that we provide will continue to operate and offer tutoring and services remotely. They're going to be very proactive about reaching out to students who need assistance, since drop-in traffic will not be as frequent this year.

The athletic department has developed a plan for fall sports teams to return to campus, which coaches and medical professionals are reviewing. We're working closely with the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and our conference, the Golden State Athletic Conference, to ensure safe participation by our athletes and by our opponents. We need to make sure our guidelines fit into the national and local guidelines, and our protocols are still being developed as we work with these organizations. I'd like to make a few assurances: One is that testing and tracing and communication between competing institutions will be hallmarks of

our safety protocols. Any athlete who tests positive for COVID will be required to have a negative test before they can return to practice or to play. Westmont will comply with the requirements of state and county officials. Currently, organized sports are not allowed in the state of California under the governor's order, which includes the county of Santa Barbara. We hope the order will be lifted in the coming weeks, but our ability to hold fall sports depends on the governor lifting his order. At the present time, the NAIA has identified August 15 as the first day when an official practice is allowed. Of course that will only happen if the governor's order is lifted. The NAIA has identified September 5 as the first day games are allowed. This is obviously a very dynamic situation, and we need to continue to monitor the regulations and decisions of local and national organizations before we can announce our own plans. Athletes have been in contact with their coaches on a regular basis, and if any athletes or parents have questions about the fall season or Westmont's preparation, they should start by contacting their coach or Athletic Director David Odell. The coaches and your athletic director will be able to provide the most up-to-date information.

**My name is Edee Schulze, and I'm vice president for student life, and I'm delighted to provide some updates related to Orientation, residence halls, and various things related to student life.** First, we're into learning. This is an opportunity for us to learn to live differently and to live on campus with each other in ways we haven't experienced before. I had a friend once who said, "If you can't get out of it, get into it." So we're going to get into it, because COVID-19 will be with us for a bit. Orientation for new students will happen predominately online. We look forward to the arrival of our new transfer students and first-year students. They'll begin moving in August 27 and continue through August 28. Each one will receive a particular arrival time. Incoming students, please check your emails for updates, specifically for the faculty advising that Mark mentioned, the Canvas course for new students with information about important aspects of Westmont's experience, and the Lunch and Learn series happening this month to introduce new students to various departments.

When new students move in, we ask them to bring no more than two people. We love that parents or family members will experience this important time, but we must limit the number. We also hope family members will return home at the end of move-in day. We're trying to maximize our space for social distancing, so we're asking parents and families to leave campus by the end of their student's move in day. We'll screen all people who come to campus for COVID-19 symptoms, which Doug will discuss later in the call.

Continuing students may move into the residence halls beginning Saturday, August 29, and they'll receive information from residence life about that. We've made some adjustments and will not have any triples in Page. If you're a new student and you've requested to live in a triple, Jon Young, our director of housing and parking services, will be in touch with you and work with you. Bathroom sinks will have plexiglass partitions between them to help prevent any spread of COVID-19. In the rooms, curtains (similar to a shower curtain or something like that)

will divide the spaces between beds but won't affect entering or leaving the room. The curtains will provide a physical boundary in the room to help keep students a bit separated. If anyone is thinking of bringing an air purifier, especially one that utilizes UV light, please communicate with Jason Tavarez, director of institutional resilience. Air purifiers need to be approved before they can be installed in residence hall rooms. Some are safe; others are less safe. We're also concerned about the electrical demand on our system. As we get closer to students coming back to campus, we'll provide more specific protocols. We ask students to consider their rooms a pod, much like a family unit. People in a pod work together to keep their living space safe and become a family unit. Residence hall kitchens will be available to students with some restrictions. Our policies will prohibit off-campus visitors in the residence halls. We want parents and families, particularly of new students, to be able to visit, but we ask them to consider the possible impact of their visit on the Westmont community. We'd love to have our students stay connected with their parents, especially our first-year students, but we're also conscious of how the virus could spread very quickly on our campus. We ask students and their families to use discernment about that.

Faculty, staff, and students will be asked to abide by a Covenant for COVID-19, which we're writing. **Our ability to live well together will depend on each of us doing our very best.** We want to provide some guidelines and appeal to everyone's sense of being a good neighbor, practicing good hygiene and using masks and social distancing. We'll make provisions for quarantine and isolation for students suspected of having the virus or coming in contact with someone who is infected. More details will come out soon about things like meal delivery and helping students with laundry. We're being very attentive to that process.

Chapel is an essential part of the Westmont experience, and we love to gather together three times a week. It's part of being at Westmont. This fall, at least through September, chapel will be online. Students will be expected to attend chapel virtually and self-report their participation. We're offering a strong lineup this fall, so students will want to participate. We'll ask you to use the honor code and record your participation in chapel because it's so important to us. Activities like the Westmont Activities Council and clubs will be virtual or in small groups, and we're being attentive to how we can support our students emotionally during our COVID-19 adaptations. Different people have different needs and different levels of comfort, so we'll provide support through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and our Health Center. We hope students participating in internships do so remotely; we'll approve on-site internships on a case-by-case basis.

**My name is Doug Jones, vice president of finance, and I'll talk about some of the operational impacts and changes related to COVID-19 plans for the fall.** We've been getting questions about COVID-19 testing. We intend to test everyone, and we've outsourced this to Exceltox. Their trained technicians will come to campus for several days in August to test everyone. Faculty, staff, and several of our early-arrival students, including athletes and student



leaders, will be tested the week of August 17. We should have results back within a day or two. New students, first-year students or transfer students, who move in August 27-28, will be tested as they arrive on campus. Any remaining students, including returning students who hadn't been tested yet, will be done August 29-30. We'll be able to establish a clean baseline as we begin the semester. We anticipate nasal swab tests, although we may be able to do the saliva cheek swab, which would be a bit quicker and a little easier to administer. Each of you, those who work on campus or will go to school on campus, will receive an email from Exceltox in August asking you to set up an account with them. They'll post results to your account so you can see how your test came out. The college will also receive a master list of everyone who took the test and who tested positive. We hope everyone is negative. We anticipate additional COVID-19 testing throughout the semester on a periodic basis, with random testing of about a third of the campus each month, so everyone gets tested twice during the fall semester.

The test reveals your status just for that particular day, so we'll have to do daily health assessments to keep the environment and the community healthy. Each morning, everyone will conduct an assessment on themselves. We'll ask you two basic questions: Do you have a fever with a temperature of 100.4 or higher?; and Do you have any COVID-19-related symptoms? We're developing an app to administer this, which we're testing right now. I've been using it every day. It's simple to use and takes just a few seconds to record your results. It creates a master result sent to our director of institutional resilience, and it also triggers an email to you telling you what you can do that day. If you answer yes to either of those questions, you'll be asked to stay home if you're faculty or staff or in your room if you're a student until your symptoms subside. We encourage you to bring a thermometer with you when you return. We'll have touchless thermometers and other temperature scanners, but it will streamline things if you use your own thermometer.

The campus has put together a social distancing protocol, which has been posted on the website since late May. It asks us all to wear face coverings, do appropriate, six-foot physical distancing, and regular and routine handwashing. All three of these practices are crucial to keeping the community healthy until we have a vaccine. We encourage everyone, all faculty, staff, and students, to follow the social distancing protocol. It begins to lay out how we should expect to live and work together in a safe environment throughout the fall.

What happens if someone on campus has suspected or actual COVID-19 or has been in contact with someone who has COVID-19? Once that word reaches Jason Tavarez, our director of institutional resilience, he will begin the contact-tracing protocol. We've got four people trained through the Johns Hopkins program and anticipate having at least 10 people trained before the start of the semester. They will get on the phone with each individual and ask a variety of questions, such as: "Where have you been, and who have you been with these last several days?" The tracers will contact the individuals identified to alert them that they may have been in contact with someone who has suspected or actual COVID-19 and ask who they've been in contact with to determine where there may have been exposure or potential contagion. It's our

best way to limit the spread of COVID-19 if it comes to campus. If we can catch it early, those who may have been exposed can self-isolate in their rooms or stay home until they're cleared with a negative test or enough days have elapsed with no symptoms. I ask and implore you that if you receive a call from one of our Westmont contact tracers, please take a few minutes and speak with them. It'll be important for you, important for your friends, important for those you've been with, and will enable the community to keep any COVID-19 at bay.

Westmont has developed a set of cleaning protocols for campus, both in general terms and for specific spaces. It involves a partnership between the custodial department and faculty, staff, and students who'll be inhabiting spaces on campus. Disinfected surfaces are an important tool in slowing the spread of the virus, and the best way to achieve that is constant cleaning. Our custodians will be through every space every day at least early in the morning. In many spaces with high traffic, they'll go through again later in the afternoon to clean surfaces. We're also asking faculty and staff to clean their offices, desks, suites and departments each day with disinfecting wipes. We're asking students to keep their residence rooms clean and help us keep bathrooms clean. Between custodial cleanings, it will be important for students to help us keep spaces clean and disinfected. Our custodians have been trained on a number of cleaning products, including one that can kill the virus for up to eight hours, which will provide good disinfecting properties for most of the day. In rooms where we might have actual or suspected COVID-19, we'll use units that will turn liquid cleaners into mist or a fog and to reach more inaccessible spaces. That will allow us to clean rooms and get them back in service in fairly short order. We've investigated all these cleaning products, and they are completely safe for people who use these spaces. Custodians all wear appropriate protective equipment as they use the products, but once they're done, the room is completely safe for the occupants.

Access to campus will be limited to those who need to be on campus. We anticipate that guests will schedule their visit to campus in advance so we know how to plan appropriately. We'll ask visitors to abide by the same health assessment and social distancing guidelines that apply to our faculty, staff and students.

The Dining Commons will be open for meals. It will look and feel a bit different. We've gone to a touchless system. As students walk in, they'll receive a bag with a to-go container, prepackaged utensils, condiments, sanitary wipes, that sort of thing. Students can clean their hands and table if they want before and after they eat. Students will go through the line, socially distanced of course, to get the food they'd like, and then exit the building and sit under one of several tents that we'll place on lawns around campus. Students can also take their food back to their room, or faculty and staff to their office. More details will come as we get closer to the start of school.

**This is Reed Sheard, and I serve as the vice president for college advancement and CIO.** I have responsibility for technology, and I will provide a brief update on what we're doing to support curricular and co-curricular endeavors during the fall semester. I'll begin with the

most important topic: Wi-Fi. We're auditing every Wi-Fi access point across the entire campus—more than 500—with upgrades and fixes being applied throughout the summer. This will ensure that wireless service functions at the highest level of availability and performance throughout campus. To provide the best possible wireless experience, students, staff and faculty will be required to meet minimum operating system requirements for notebooks, smartphones, and iPads. IT will provide more information on these requirements later this summer. IT is also working on increasing the amount of internet bandwidth available to Westmont, and progress is very promising. We're confident more bandwidth will be available, which will help with the overall performance as more academic and cocurricular content is shared via the internet. IT is also working to support the new Wi-Fi 6 standard this fall, which will make Westmont one of the few schools nationwide to provide campus-wide support for Wi-Fi 6, which is more than three times faster than previous wireless protocols. As people obtain devices that support this standard, the Westmont wireless network will be ready.

Since internet capacity is a finite and shared resource for our entire Westmont community, we've decided to limit internet traffic between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. to reserve it primarily for academic and institutional priorities. All services will work, but academic and institutional priorities will take precedence. From 5 p.m. to 6 a.m., other traffic will be supported, such as gaming, Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, YouTube, etc. Two-factor authentication—which involves receiving a number by text or email to sign into a site along with your username and password—will be required for access to Westmont Gmail and other Google-hosted services such as Google Docs, Google Groups, and others. While this may be inconvenient, it's necessary to combat the increased security threats that have emerged during COVID-19. This level of security will help protect your data and personal information. IT will have more information about this requirement later this summer and will work to make it as convenient as possible.

The computer labs will be available and cleaned on a schedule determined by the facilities team to ensure that the technology the college provides is safe and available for use. Printing stations will be expanded and decentralized to help with social distancing and to provide easier access to printing services. We plan to make printing available at various locations across campus in addition to the library before the fall semester begins.

In my role in heading up Advancement, the fundraising arm of the college, I want to offer a heartfelt thank you. Early in March, when the COVID-19 pandemic was just beginning to affect us, we reached out and asked for help from our Westmont community. So many of you—including alums, parents, faculty, staff, trustees, college leaders and board members—have contributed to the COVID-19 emergency relief fund. We'll continue to raise funds to support the safe opening of the campus—the plans you've heard tonight—but I wanted to extend deep gratitude on behalf of myself, President Beebe, the executive team and the entire Westmont community. When we asked you to step forward, you did. Thank you.

**It's President Beebe, and I'll work through the questions that have come in.**

*Q: With the current resurgence of COVID-19 cases and increased restrictions on indoor activities called for in several counties, including Santa Barbara, is it wise to even consider opening this fall on the currently planned schedule or opening at all?*

**A:** We believe it's wise to consider and continue to plan to reopen. An excellent article by the president of Cornell University demonstrates that college students are actually safer being on campus, where they can be tested, traced and isolated, than being on their own. In fact, being on campus can decrease the spread by tenfold. We believe a school our size can allow students to continue their life and education in a way that gives them the greatest likelihood of preserving their health during this time.

*Q: What should international students plan for because of the recent ICE order?*

**A:** Edee Schulze, vice president for student life, will respond to this question. We just learned that any students with F-1 visas need to be enrolled in a college bringing students back to campus for the fall semester to remain here in the United States. Since we'll combine classes in person with some online classes, our international students will be allowed to stay in the United States.

*Q: Can parents help returning students move into their rooms? We know we'll need to buy certain items for the room, so we'll have to return with our student after buying them. Is that possible, or do we only get a one-time visit to campus during move-in day?*

**A:** Yes, that's possible. We want people to be careful when they come to campus. We want them to consider if the visit is essential, but we won't prevent you from coming to campus. We just want you to use discernment when you come.

*Q: Will students be required to remain on campus once tested?*

**A:** Again, we want to discourage all non-essential travel. So if students need to go off campus from time to time to get groceries, that's fine. If they need to go home for a family emergency, that's fine. But we really encourage our students to limit their non-essential travel.

*Q: How does Westmont plan to maintain a student in quarantine and get them the necessary services, i.e., the food and fluids they need, without them leaving their rooms if they come down with COVID-19?*

**A:** We're working on the details of that. More information will come out as we finalize exactly how that's going to happen. We did this successfully in the spring with a number of students who were here and were quarantined for possible exposure to the virus. We fed them, we provided access to the bathroom, we helped them with laundry, and all those sorts of things. I have a high degree of confidence we'll be able to do that again.

***Q:*** *When are room assignments going to be made for new students?*

**A:** We'll make those assignments around July 20, so look for the information then.

***Q:*** *Are UVC lights and lamps safe for use in student rooms? What kind are safest?*

**A:** *Jason Taverez, director of institutional resilience, will respond to this question.* Many of you may have heard about UVC lights used to kill biotic materials in the air. The most common ones are 222 nm and 254 nm bulbs. An article in Nature said 222 nm are pretty safe relative to the 254 nm, so I urge you to use the 222 nm, also known as "far" UVC. The 254 are a bit more likely to have serious health effects, especially depending on exposure. But before using any UVC lights in the room, reach out to the Office of Institutional Resilience to learn if your light is safe to use in your dorm room.

***Q:*** *I'm curious about the filtration systems in the dorm rooms. Aren't many of the dorm room buildings very old? The students are in such close proximity and breathing the same air. Will these systems be updated?*

**A:** *Doug Jones, vice president for finance, will respond to this question.* Systems that recirculate air in our buildings have been set to 100 percent outside air, so they're not recirculating air, they're pulling in outside air that is heated or cooled depending on what the system will do. Many of our residence halls are old enough that they don't have those kinds of systems. So we'll encourage students in those buildings to keep their windows partly open most of the time to allow some airflow through. That's our best option.

***Q:*** *Are Homecoming and Commencement happening the same weekend on campus?*

**A:** At this point, yes. We're planning that October 16, 17 and 18 will be both Homecoming and Commencement. Questions have come in about other formats we might use, and we'll have to see what the county will allow as we continue to make plans.

***Q:*** *Is First-Year Parents Weekend cancelled?*

*A: Reed Sheard, vice president for advancement and CIO, will respond to this question.*

First-Year Parents Weekend will happen the first weekend in November with a lot of virtual activities. Look for more information from the Parent Relations office and Sarah Camp.

We were scheduled to bring Jon Meacham, the famous presidential historian, to campus November 6. It's unlikely he'll make it since there's no vaccine yet. But we're in negotiations with his agent to do a broadcast that day, and we hope to combine his talk, which would also be available virtually, with Homecoming and Commencement activities.

*Q: Will Westmont provide rebates for room and board if the college has to close for COVID-19?*

*A: Doug Jones, vice president for finance, will respond to this question.* If the college needs to close for COVID-19, whether that's an internal decision or the county mandates it, we'll do prorated refunds for room and board for the fall semester.

*Q: When do you expect the COVID-19 plan for fall semester to be posted to Westmont's website?*

*A:* We won't post the entire plan, which is 158 pages long. We'll post updates, frameworks, overviews or outlines as needed or as requested.

*Q: Will there be any online classes available for students who don't want to return to campus?*

*A: Provost Mark Sargent will respond to this question.* As I mentioned earlier, we'll offer about 30 online courses. If a student has interest in studying remotely, we ask that you get in touch with the provost's office. We'd like to learn more about the circumstances, and we can talk to you about the possibilities with your schedule. We want to ensure the community on campus, and we realize that some people have unique medical needs, so we'll want to take those into consideration.

*Q: Will the fall semester close by mid-November, i.e., before Thanksgiving with students returning in January?*

*A:* At this point, no. Anything is possible, but we're going to start classes on August 31. We'll take Thanksgiving break. Anyone who leaves the state of California will have to return in time to get retested. The protocols we're using to manage the campus will continue, and we'll end the semester as scheduled in December. We'll stay in conversation with the county about what the governor and the county health officer will allow. Some have asked why we haven't adopted the Notre Dame schedule, which is starting August 10 and finishing before Thanksgiving. Right now, we're hoping we get to open by August 31, and we're glad we have the extra runway. We lived in Michigan for seven years, which is about a three-hour drive from South Bend, Indiana.

By November 1, it's colder in South Bend than it ever gets in Santa Barbara. We live in an ideal climate. If COVID-19 manifestation is tied at all to weather-related patterns, which we're not sure it is, we should be OK. We're not planning to modify the calendar.

***Q:** Will California require any students from other states to quarantine for 14 days after arriving?*

***A:** Jason Taverez, director of institutional resilience, will respond to this question.* At this time, there has been no talk of excluding any state travel into California. Unfortunately, California is not looking great right now, so we don't have concerns about people from other states.

***Q:** Will Capax Dei groups be permitted to gather in person?*

***A:*** In all likelihood yes, provided they can socially distance six feet. We'll be very careful with that, but those groups are small enough to do that.

***Q:** What precautions will be taken to ensure food being served to students hasn't been contaminated by a sneeze or a cough?*

*Jason Taverez, director of institutional resilience, will respond to this question.* We're installing plexiglass barriers throughout campus, including in the Dining Commons, wherever there are public-facing areas, where an employee is facing the public while they're doing their job. Everything we've seen regarding COVID-19 infections shows that if you ingest it through your food, your stomach acid breaks down the COVID-19 material, preventing transmission.

We'll post answers to any other questions that come to the website. So if you have a question, we'll try to respond to it. We want to repopulate the campus more than anything. We're preparing for that right now. I participated today in our Trailhead program, which is helping us test-drive our various tools. I filled out Jason's nicely crafted form and had to take my own temperature and record it. I think we're all up for the challenge. We want to do it in the right way that shows great respect for one another and also for the mission of the college. We believe we're in a position to take good care of students, faculty and staff and that we have the resources we need and access to additional resources to provide the full complement of services as usual. I always believe we're the right size because we can be immediately attentive to needs as they develop. Thank you so much for staying with us, and God be with you.