

## **Ask Munson**

WITR Henrietta--

LUKE AUBURN: You're listening to WITR 89.7, and you're tuned into a very special edition of the Ask Munson Show. This is the first episode since the coronavirus pandemic reached the Greater Rochester area, causing RIT to shift its instruction entirely to alternative methods. I'm your host, Luke Auburn, senior communication specialist at RIT, a two-time RIT alum, and a WITR community member. I'm joined today by RIT's 10th present, Dr. David C Munson.

These are unusual times, and they call for an unusual episode. President Munson and I are coming to you live from WITR Studio A recording the program in two separate rooms to practice good social distancing. Traditionally, the program is hosted by RIT students, but since all of WITR's students have headed home for the semester, I'm filling in.

We have a lot to cover today, including the state of RIT, details about how RIT city is responding to the coronavirus. We'll be fielding questions submitted by listeners. If you have a question you would like answered on the program, you can tweet using the hashtag #AskMunson. We'll do our best to provide you an answer. But before we get to all that, President Munson, how are you and your family doing? Is everyone healthy and well? Are you mostly holed up at Liberty Hill these days?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Well, we're definitely holed up at Liberty Hill. And thanks for asking. Our family is well. My wife is still volunteering at St. Joseph Neighborhood Center downtown that offers low-cost medical care, but they're not seeing patients face to face at the moment. And we've got sons and other families sprinkled all across the country, but everybody's in good shape so far. Thanks.

LUKE AUBURN: Wonderful. I'm glad to hear that. So we have a lot of questions to get to today, but first, can you just give us a-- from a high-level perspective, where is RIT at currently? What's the state of RIT right now?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Well, as you know from being here on campus, the campus is mostly closed now. We do have some students left in the dorms, but not very many. And faculty and staff are mostly working from home. We have only a few exceptions. We have some staff that are still taking care of the physical plant and are here in person on occasion. And we have of some faculty who need to come in and use certain resources to work on their online courses, but the campus is really quiet, and I'll even say a little bit spooky right now.

LUKE AUBURN: It is definitely strange to see the campus so empty, especially at the-- in the middle of the school year. Usually it's not like this at this point. So can you tell us a little bit about how things are going from an academic perspective, since we made the transition to alternative delivery for the remainder of the semester?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Yeah. So online delivery seems to be going really fairly well. We realize there are a handful of students out there who still have some issues, but in the main, we

have received a lot of feedback that is really quite positive. Our faculty, of course, had the week after the regular spring break to sort of tool up and work on transitioning their materials to online, and in some cases, had to really conceive of some new types of assignments and exercises. And it rolled out pretty well, and so far, we're happy with how it's going. Although, if there are students who are having difficulties, then we certainly want to hear about that.

LUKE AUBURN: OK. So as part of that adjustment, RIT introduced a new grading policy for this semester. This is to help ensure that students who don't fall behind due to challenging circumstances-- can you explain what that means for students and what the new policy generally means?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Sure. So we realize that students are not taking the coursework under normal circumstances and, depending upon what they're facing on the home front, they may have other obligations. And certainly, we all have concerns about the virus itself. So we did change to a pass/fail grading system for this fall. Letter grades will be assigned by a faculty member, but the student has the option to stick with pass/fail unless they request that that letter grade be recorded. And so we're trying to do this at the advantage of the student.

LUKE AUBURN: So along the theme of switching mid-semester, this is a big undertaking and it requires to support students in unanticipated ways. How has RIT continued to make sure that students who need support, whether they are deaf and hard of hearing or need some other accommodations, are still able to receive it? And where we do it to help students who have limited technology available at home?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Well, a number of things here-- first of all, there is one of our trustees who provided quite a large gift to help purchase technology for students who don't have, say, a laptop at home, and then other trustees chipped in and matched-- more than matched that gift, actually. So that enabled us to purchase a couple Chromebooks. And so for a student who doesn't have the right technology, they can just simply request one of these Chromebooks.

LUKE AUBURN: We also realize that we have some students living in rural areas, where they may not have good internet service, so we also have a number of hotspots that can be given out to students. We have supplied a number of these items to members of our student body, but we have a number left as well. So if any student is having difficulty in that realm, they should just let us know.

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Regarding deaf and hard of hearing students, I was just communicating with the president of NTID, Gerry Buckley, a couple of days ago, and it seems like everything is going OK for that community. But we do realize that there may be some special challenges there as well.

LUKE AUBURN: So looping back, if the students need accommodations, how do they reach out? What would be the appropriate way to do so?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: They could reach out to their faculty member, to their department chair, to the dean. They could send a note to the provost's office. And then, of course, there's a

help line, a coronavirus help line. They could also just use that. If they can just get to the RIT website and go to the coronavirus web page, there will be all kinds of contact information there. So pretty much any way we learn about this, we'll respond.

LUKE AUBURN: OK. I believe the email addresses [coronavirusresponse@rit.edu](mailto:coronavirusresponse@rit.edu).

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Yes, I think that's right. Thank you.

LUKE AUBURN: Thank you. So before all this happened-- it's hard to remember back then, but RIT had several major construction projects going on. We were in the midst of finishing the Global Cybersecurity Institute, and there were plans for projects like the Innovative Making and Learning Complex, which would connect the SAU and the library, as well as Performing Arts Center. Where do those projects currently stand?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: That's a great question, because that is a lot of major activity. So the Global Cybersecurity Institute building, of course, has been under construction for a while. It was to be completed this summer, but as of just a week or so ago, the state changed their ruling on ongoing construction projects and asked that all construction, with only a handful of exceptions, be halted.

And so we did have to stop the construction on our Cybersecurity Institute. That may end up delaying the opening by just a little bit, but if we're lucky, we'll get that construction going again within a few weeks. We'll see how that plays out. Regarding the IMLC, or Innovative Maker Learner Complex, that is under design and that design was already scheduled to last into the fall.

And so except for some of the architects having to work from home, we don't expect a big delay there. The Performing Arts Center is in the same realm. It is under design. In fact, that design started not all that long ago-- just a couple of months ago. And so the Performing Arts Center is still early in the design phase. Neither are those large buildings was scheduled to begin construction for quite a while yet, and so I think we're good there.

If we look longer term, another possible project we had in mind was in the realm of athletics. We were talking about the possibility of building what I referred to as a real stadium for soccer and lacrosse, and some additional athletic fields. That project is not as far along, and if we were to pull back on something for a little while, most likely, it would be in that area.

LUKE AUBURN: OK, so that makes sense So the others appear to be going forward. OK. Let's get to some questions submitted by our listeners. One person submitted a question asking about refunds. And I know RIT recently released information about the refund policy for things like dining and housing. Can you explain what RIT will be refunding, what they won't, and what the reasoning behind everything is?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Sure. So we're going to be refunding a pro-rated amount of housing and dining costs. And the housing costs are for students that were residing in university-owned housing. We, of course, had many students in housing on the outskirts of campus, perhaps on John Street or East River Road. That housing is not owned by RIT, and so we have no control

over how the financial arrangements are made with the people that-- and corporations that own that housing.

So we are going to be providing pro-rated refunds of dining and housing. That's being looked at on an individual basis, though, student by student, because there are some students where, as-- for whom part of their financial aid package really was paying for their-- part of their dining and housing, and so we've got to factor that in as well. And we're also going to be refunding a prorated amount for parking.

The one thing that we do get asked about where we're really not in a position to provide a refund is for tuition. Obviously, we're continuing to teach the courses. We're going to be graduating our students on time. And we have to have money to pay the faculty and staff that make all that possible.

And plus we have to have sufficient resources to keep the band together. That is, when we get to fall, we want to have all our faculty and staff intact, and so we have to be able to pay them. And so we're not providing refunds of tuition, but in the other areas, we are.

LUKE AUBURN: OK, thanks for explaining the rationale. Commencement was on several people's minds. We received a lot of questions about this. One person asked, how will the class of 2020 be able to receive their robes, honors, stoles, and caps? Others are wondering if we'll hold some sort of virtual ceremony. Are you going to speak? Do we have any plans of what it's going to look like at this point?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Yeah. So obviously, we're waiting just a little while to see how the virus situation ends up playing out. We have a couple of main options that we're thinking about. The most likely option, I would say, is that we would have some sort of face-to-face ceremony this coming fall perhaps either over Labor Day weekend or during Brick City Homecoming.

And if we were to do that, I think we're still going to want to do something virtually that is over the internet in May, but it would not take the form of any sort of traditional commencement. The other option is if opening classes at the beginning of fall is looking a little bit dicey, then we may actually want to try to have a full-out virtual commencement perhaps even in May, and then if we are able to open in the fall, to still have a party or something in the fall.

But those are the two main options. I know somebody had asked about caps and gowns. We're still making a decision on whether we mail those out, or if we have a ceremony on campus, whether people pick them up on campus. And then, of course, there's the in-between option, which is maybe we mail out the caps to everyone. At least they could take photographs with their caps. They could decorate them and what have you.

And then, if they come back for the face-to-face commencement, the robes would be there. And we'd be interested in opinions on students-- from students, in terms of what they'd like to do. We've also already received probably comments from 100 or more students suggesting to us what would be most convenient for them and their families, but we're still soliciting information there.

I think, within the next few weeks, we'll probably make a decision on this, in terms of which direction we're heading, whether it seems very likely we'll have a face-to-face commencement at some point in the fall. But we just really have to get past the peak of the virus, get on the downhill part of the curve, and start gaining some confidence with what we think will be possible in the future.

LUKE AUBURN: OK, great. Another listener asked, what is happening with students who were planning to work or study on campus over the summer? Some need summer housing and will need a sign a lease soon. So will there be in-person classes over the summer? Do we still not know? Are there still decisions being made about that?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: So we have some information, but not as much as everybody would probably like at this point. So I think, for any of the summer classes that would occur during the month of June, those are going to be online for sure. In July, we're going to be asking our faculty to plan on teaching online, and then if we're pleasantly surprised, maybe we'll be able to hold those classes in person.

We are canceling most events and summer camps on campus through the month of June. There are some exceptions. One important one I want to mention is that many high schools in our area hold their commencements in our field house. We have not canceled those commencements or moved those commencements, at least not yet. But for summer camps and academic activities-- things related to academics-- we are either canceling or putting those online at least through the month of June.

LUKE AUBURN: OK, interesting. Another person asked, are there mental health resources available for those living at home, and will there be an increase in mental health assistance for-- in the fall semester? Some students have had to return to tough environments or may have family members who are affected by coronavirus. What are the mental health services available?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Great question, and an important one-- so our standard mental health services are pretty much still available, but in a different form online. And again, if you go to the coronavirus part of our website, you'll find instructions on that. There's one little sticky part, and that is there are some regulations that don't at least strictly allow for us to provide full service counseling to students who are outside the state of New York.

That's not our rule. That's somebody else's rule. We're trying to get that changed during this period, but for the most part, students can receive similar services to what they're used to seeing-- or used to receiving from our CaPS, the Counseling and Psychological Services Center.

In terms of extra staffing in the fall semester, we haven't contemplated that yet. I think a lot of our audience will recall that it was about a year ago, year and a half ago-- we added about 50% more staff in the CaPS area at RIT. And we feel like we've been staffed up to about the right level, and we're hopeful that that will still be sufficient this coming fall.

LUKE AUBURN: OK, thank you for answering that. Had another interesting question from a listener-- they wrote, after the 2008 recession, Netflix pivoted its business away from DVD and

into streaming, which paid off big in the long run. Has RIT considered any pivots it might make to uniquely differentiate itself from other universities in the coming school year?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: That is something we're thinking about a little bit. We don't have a lot to report there, and I-- especially during the current period, where there's so much suffering, and so many deaths, and severe hospitalizations. It's maybe a little bit early to be thinking about what might be the opportunities that could emerge from what we all learn from this, and how might it change our teaching and research practices, but we do have people who are thinking about that.

One thing I'll predict for sure is that prior to this, there was only a part of our student body in a part of our faculty that had any significant experience with online instruction. And I think this is going to be a huge learning experience for all of us, in terms of what works, what doesn't work, what kind of things-- for what kind of things was it possible to make modifications and still create an effective education over the web?

And I think we're going to learn a lot from that, and I think we're going to have larger components of online education integrated into RIT. On the other hand, I know for sure that it seems like everybody in our community can hardly wait to get back together again, to get into the labs, to get into the art studios, and to do all those hands-on things that especially RIT students so much enjoy.

LUKE AUBURN: Thank you. Another question was about co-ops and internship requirements. Some students have been disrupted mid-semester. Some are looking for the summer, and there are hiring freezes in many corporations. How will co-op and internship requirements be modified for this semester, the summer, in the future? Do we have a policy for that?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Yeah. That's an important question. I don't have a full answer to that. What I think is that, if a student was engaged in a co-op, and let's say they were a graduating senior and haven't been able to finish that co-op this semester, and that's all they need for graduation, I'm assuming we're going to be flexible enough to just kind of write that one off and not worry about it.

What I am less clear about is, what about that student was supposed to start the co-op this coming summer, and maybe they were going to be starting it in May, and now can't start it until July 1 or some other date, as determined by that company and when it's safe to go back to work? I've not been involved in those conversations. So I think the deans will have information on that, because they've been talking with the provost about that. But I'm not party to the latest decision making there.

LUKE AUBURN: So RIT's, over the years, grown its footprint and research quite a bit, and I know a lot of people have been asking about, how are those research grants that we're doing being impacted? Is research continuing at RIT currently? When will it resume, if projects have been put on hold? Do you have any insight on that?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Boy, that's another good question. So yes, we have been increasing the amount of research, including funded research done on our campus. And what we really were

forced to do was to bring most of our laboratory operations to a halt. We have different kinds of research that occurs on campus for the work that was being done on computers, or maybe it's theoretical work. Some of it's even paper and pencil.

And the work that involves writing up previous research results, submitting journal articles, and conference papers, and what have you-- all of that can still continue at home or for the students engaged in their homes. But there is some laboratory work that requires special equipment, special facilities, and we really did have to halt almost all of that.

The only kind of laboratory work that is really allowed to go on now is work that might somehow positively impact the coronavirus situation. So we have a very small amount of work like that. One thing that I will mention just as an example in that area is professor Nabil Nasr and his group in our Center for Integrated Manufacturing Studies, and also the Sustainability Institute.

They've been involved in a very major project in designing and producing a ventilator especially for our local hospitals. That is a pretty sizable team that's been working on that project, and of course, that kind of project was allowed to continue.

LUKE AUBURN: Yeah. And that seemed like it was a big Rochester-wide effort that we were leading-- lots of collaborations with other--

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Yes. This is a collaboration that has involved a number of local corporations, and also Rochester Regional Health. We even had a number of their medical clinicians in our labs over at RIT on a number of occasions looking at a prototype device and making recommendations on just how it would need to perform in order to be effective in helping treat a COVID patient. We've also been working with the University of Rochester to get some help with FDA approval for this device.

LUKE AUBURN: That's interesting. What are some of the other ways that the RIT community's been rallying around this cause? Seems like there's been a few stories out there of people using their unusual talents to make a difference where they can, whether it's in [INAUDIBLE]

PRESIDENT MUNSON: There sure have. So RIT's also been involved in making surgical masks and in making face shields, so we have a number of faculty members and students who have been involved in that effort. One of our trustees, Ron Ricotta, has a company called Century Mold. It's an injection molding company, a plastics molding company, and one of the largest and most capable probably in the entire western side of New York State.

And they are producing an enormous number of face shields for use in hospitals. On that earlier ventilator project I mentioned, another of our trustees, David Burns, has been very involved there. Dave is an expert in manufacturing, including 3D printing, so he's been very involved in that ventilator project. And then Rochester Regional Health and RIT have been partnering in a number of other ways, one of which is in tracking this virus.

So they just recently asked for some help. They wanted a professor in either mathematics or statistics who was an expert in modeling to help their team at Rochester Regional in essentially predicting what this virus is going to be doing within our region of the state. So those are just some of the things, but there are quite a few others as well.

LUKE AUBURN: Along those lines, someone asked, how can RIT address the many issues associated with coronavirus through our curriculum? It seems like just about every major we have, from engineering, to public policy, to health sciences could use this as a teaching lesson. So do you expect that to be happening in the classroom?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: That's a good question, and I think it comes from a good place in people's hearts, where we all want to chip in. And there are so many aspects of this virus, and its spread, and possible treatment that are just very poorly understood that is probably true that a lot of different disciplines will be able to contribute to a study of this-- and some other disciplines, of course, that are going to be contributing right now to possible developments of a vaccine or testing of existing drugs that might at least help somewhat.

We do have some other research that I haven't mentioned. We have a faculty member working on something called giant phages-- P-H-A-G-E-S. These giant phages are organisms that attack multiple viruses, and so that's an example of another type of research where we've green lighted it at this time, even though, in general, we've halted most of the laboratory-type research on campus.

But I think they're probably going to be quite a number of faculty and staff who, over time, are going to be taking a look back at what we've just experienced and trying to develop better models and really get us much better prepared for the next time that this sort of thing might occur.

LUKE AUBURN: That's fascinating. This is just a reminder that you're listening to WITR 89.7. We're joined today by President David C Munson. This is the Ask Munson Show. If you have a question you'd like asked over the air, you can tweet using the hashtag #AskMunson. My next question is-- someone asked, how is RIT faring financially during this crisis? Other universities are considering layoffs and worried about the ability to provide complete financial aid packages in the coming semesters. Is RIT thinking about these things?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Oh yeah, where we're looking at the financial side really carefully, because we never really like to think of a university as a business, but if we don't have our business hat on it at this time as well as our concern for our neighbors and for each other, we really won't be in a good position for the future. So the refunds for housing and meals are really going to add up to many millions of dollars that are not in our budget.

We hope to recoup some of that from the federal rescue bill that was passed not long ago by Congress, but we're still going to have many millions that are unaccounted for. In addition, whereas many of our faculty and staff-- I'd say probably almost all our faculty, and a lot of our staff-- are able to work from home and still do very effective things for the institution, no surprise-- we're going to have some staff who really can't do their jobs if they're not on campus.

And so we're going to have to think about that over the longer term. We don't yet have a plan for a furlough, or layoffs, or those sorts of things, but we've been keeping close tabs on the federal legislation.

The benefits that are provided there for a person who is either laid off or furloughed are really generous when added to the already existing state benefits, and so that's something we're going to be looking at. But we really want to make sure that every member of our community is taken care of, and that is especially true for our wage earners at the lower end of the scale.

LUKE AUBURN: Interesting. Someone else asked, will the dorms be used for COVID patients? I think they've seen that at other local universities.

PRESIDENT MUNSON: So we've been contacted by multiple organizations outside of RIT that have an interest in potentially-- not definitely, but potentially using university housing. So these are our workers who are maybe more likely to be exposed to the virus. The one thing that I think I can talk about-- and I won't talk about all of them-- is that, with Rochester Regional Health, they have a number of docs, and nurses, and other medical staff members who, when they finish their shift, they go home and they're not mixing with their families because they're not sure that it's safe to do that.

So they may be living in a basement or living in a garage or something. They have asked us if we would be willing to make some of our housing available. They haven't said that they would want to take advantage of that for sure, but they've at least made the inquiry. On our side, what we've done is identified an apartment complex where there would be no students living there. And if Rochester Regional were to want to use that, we're certainly willing to talk to them about that.

Obviously, there would be-- we would allow a longtime to elapse between the departure of any visitors using our housing. Things would be thoroughly cleaned and we'd make sure there was no chance whatsoever of any virus sticking around. So we have a way to think about this and sort of a segregated fashion. If we do have some outside community members living in our student housing, we're not going to be mixing these people with our students.

LUKE AUBURN: OK, that's very interesting. Another question was about international students. Someone seemed concerned about international students who may have been away while they-- during the break and weren't able to return to get their belongings, or who maybe didn't have a place to go. Maybe their home country was under quarantine. What sort of services have we been providing for international students?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Yeah, that's another important question. So we worked hard to get as many of our students to move out of university-owned housing as possible by April 5, and so the vast majority of students are moved out. But there are some who are not. There are some who really had no place to go, and so we're continuing to house-- it's actually under 300 students still in university housing.

And then there are others who were not able to return to retrieve their belongings, and what we're doing for right now is just leaving their belongings in their rooms, and we'll hope to arrange for

later pickup. But for right now, those belongings are safe and sound and they have not been disturbed.

LUKE AUBURN: OK. I'm sure that's reassuring for people to hear. We just got another interesting question. It appears that someone is looking for cooking tips. They're stuck at home and they asked you, what is the most epic way to cook spaghetti? So if you have any culinary tips for [INAUDIBLE]

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Oh, looking for cooking tips-- oh my goodness. I don't know if I'm the right one to ask. I guess the tips I'll give-- and this isn't going to help very much-- but my wife and I, we've been going to the grocery store as infrequently as possible, because we don't want to mix with very many other people. And now when we go, we're wearing a mask, and I think it's a really good idea to wear a mask, because every little bit helps, in terms of lessening your chance of contracting this virus.

And so when we go to the store, we load up and just try to do that in one visit, and then not go back for a week or 10 days. We've been loading up with healthy things. Neither of us is vegetarian, so we've got plenty of chicken and healthy meats, and a lot of fresh produce. We're trying to eat well. We're trying to have lots of vitamins and try to fortify ourselves, in case that's needed. But I'm not going to throw out any favorite recipes.

LUKE AUBURN: OK, well, that's good advice nonetheless. Another person reached out asking just generally, if students feel like they need help, where can they reach out for support, whether it's academically, if they feel like their professors are having trouble adjusting to online, or whether it's something going on at home, or they need help technologically?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: The answer's not too much different from an earlier question much earlier in the show, but in this case, what I'd do-- obviously, you start with your faculty member, but if that's not working out, then next step up is the department chair. Next step up above that is either the dean or associate dean. But there's also this general help center, and this help center is well-staffed, and they are literally following up on every single thing that comes in-- every kind of call, every kind of problem.

And I can tell our students that the number of students who are encountering difficulties is small enough that the problems for each student are actually being handled individually. And so you will get individual attention, and your problems will be followed up upon.

LUKE AUBURN: Just for those who are listening and don't know what the call center is, it's 585-475-3500. So now that's out there. It's a resource available to you. Another question was from someone speculating, and they're wondering, if this pandemic continues and fall semester isn't able to resume as normal, what would instruction look like?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: So we're considering a number of different scenarios that could develop for the fall, or even during the next academic year. We're keeping the options open and we're trying to arrange a budget for the university that would allow us to work under any of these

scenarios. And I can mention a number of them, but we don't know what's going to happen for sure.

We think it's most likely that we'll be able to open with a regular fall semester, but we realize there's some chance that might not happen. So some of the other options being considered are to actually start school early. Suppose we were worried that a second wave of the virus could come-- I don't know-- in late November or something. We may actually want to try to open the semester a little bit early.

Another option would be to certainly open on time, plan on finishing the whole semester. But we'd also have to be prepared that, if we open on time, maybe we'd have to finish this semester online. Yet another option is to-- if we had to, to start the semester online, and then bring all the students back partway into the semester and complete it face to face with all the usual laboratory and studio kinds of experiences.

Kind of a worst case scenario might be that, gee, we really have to do the whole fall semester online, and then we start face to face classes for the winter term in January. We certainly hope that doesn't happen. And of course, the things that it will impact which of these scenarios plays out, it's not just seeing the virus problem decline in the coming weeks and getting way, way past that peak, but really, we have to have much improved testing.

And we also will feel a lot better if some of the existing drugs that are out there are actually effective not in preventing the virus from taking hold, but in limiting its severity. And so there are a number of things we're going to be watching for, and a lot of this will be guided by the public health authorities.

We're in close contact with our local authorities in Monroe County and with the governor's office, as well as listening to the Centers for Disease Control and the federal authorities. We'll be looking to them for guidance, and we'll be really keeping people's safety as our number one priority.

LUKE AUBURN: It's a fluid situation, but it sounds like you have everyone looking at all the important indicators. We had another question that was relayed to student workers and students who their only source of income was when they were working on campus. And they're wondering, what should they be doing if they're concerned financially or from that loss of income?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Unfortunately, this is an area where I don't really have a complete answer. I just hope we can get back to normal as fast as we can. There are still quite a number of students who are employed because they can do and are doing useful things off campus, but for some of the students who are working in food service, for example, our food service is almost entirely shut down.

We do have and have made some effort at placing a number of students into different kinds of jobs where they still could be useful, but unfortunately, we have not been able to promise

continuing employment for everyone. So I think our biggest hope is that a few weeks from now, or a month from now, or a month and a half from now, we can get rolling again.

LUKE AUBURN: Thanks for addressing that. Our time here is close to wrapping up. I'm curious-- what closing comments do you have? What encouragement would you have for the RIT community at whole, whether it's alumni, students, faculty, or staff?

PRESIDENT MUNSON: Well, I guess the first thing I want to do is just thank our community for really rallying to the cry, so to speak, and really assisting in every way possible. I want to thank our faculty and the staff that worked so hard at really converting almost our entire curriculum to online format. There've been some very creative things done there that I've been really impressed with.

I want to thank our student body for being so patient and understanding. We're doing our best, and we're going to get through this. And then I certainly want to thank our communications staff. One thing I've heard over and over again from people out there in the community is how well they think RIT is communicating.

And I don't take much credit for that. We have a terrific communications staff that has spearheaded this, and we hear over and over again maybe from a parent that has a son or daughter RIT and maybe a son or daughter at some other school, and they're just feeling way more comfortable with the level of communication, and maybe even in some cases, the decisions being made at RIT.

I don't want to, again, take a lot of credit for this, but I do want to thank the people that are involved. And my best wishes to our entire audience, to your loved ones. Stay safe. Follow the rules. Follow the guidelines. Stay apart as long as we need to. And then, when we all get to come back together again, it's going to be one heck of a party. So take care.

LUKE AUBURN: Thanks, President Munson. We really appreciate you taking the time to address the community for those words of encouragement. Hope you and your family continue to stay healthy, and we look forward to seeing this place busy once again, and can't wait for that to happen. So that concludes this special edition of Ask Munson. If you missed portions of the program, we're planning to post the recording and transcript of the interview to [rit.edu/news](http://rit.edu/news) as soon as possible.

I'd like to thank WITR chief engineer William Leuschner and the rest of the WITR e-board for helping make this broadcast possible. Stay safe, Tigers. You're listening to WITR 89.7, the pulse of music.