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MUSC trustees to hear status of health system recovery, acknowledge 660 graduates

Diploma drive-thru pick up set for Saturday, May 16, at MUSC Harper Student Center

CHARLESTON, S.C. (May 7, 2020) – On Friday, May 15, the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and Medical University Hospital Authority (MUHA) Board of Trustees will hold a one-day combined committee/board meeting beginning at 9:00 a.m. In keeping with efforts to deter the transmission of the COVID-19 virus, this meeting will be held via conference call, not in person.

“As our state’s economy begins to reopen, we look forward to hearing more about our current progress with the recovery plan established by the MUSC leadership team,” said Charles W. Schulze, CPA, chairman of the MUSC/MUHA Board of Trustees. Like hospitals across the nation, MUSC Health significantly slowed its operations in accordance with government urging to prepare for a potential influx of COVID-19 patients. Having sustained a significant ongoing loss of revenue, the health system must now ramp up to regain its financial footing.

“We recognize the need to act deliberately and prudently, putting the safety of MUSC employees and patients first and foremost,” said MUSC President David J. Cole, M.D. FACS. “Throughout the ongoing challenges of this pandemic, our teams have proved their ability to use accurate data, scientific insight and breakthrough clinical care to meet the health care needs of our statewide community. Using a phased approach that will continue to include appropriate social distancing along with diagnostic and antibody testing, we will gradually resume full operation of our health system,” Cole added.

Due to the requirements of social distancing during the COVID-19 era, for the first time since the Civil War MUSC was forced to cancel its spring commencement exercises. To offer the 660 graduating students an opportunity to celebrate their many achievements, university and health system leaders will participate in a diploma drive-thru pick up on Saturday, May 16, from 8:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. Graduates can drive thru the parking area at the MUSC Harper Student Center, 45 Courtenay Drive, to collect their actual diplomas, which are usually mailed after commencement.

Each of the six colleges has a designated time to ride through, safely collect their diplomas and receive congratulatory cheers, waves and applause from college deans, staff and administrators. The number of
graduates from each of the colleges are: Dental Medicine – 80, Graduate Studies – 35, Health Professions – 162, Medicine – 172, Nursing – 128 and Pharmacy – 83.

“We are so proud of our students and their outstanding accomplishments,” said Lisa K. Saladin, PT, Ph.D., executive vice president for Academic Affairs and Provost. “Our graduates were tested by these sudden and unprecedented circumstances and they did not falter. They are well prepared to face a health care environment that presents more adversity than we have seen in decades or to join the scientists committed to discovering solutions to address health care crises such as COVID-19. We wish we could give them all the graduation festivities that they have earned and deserve; however, we hope the few moments of celebration we can deliver in the diploma drive-thru will be both memorable and special.”

Members of the media and the public who wish to hear the MUSC board call, may connect via this number: (843) 876-8002, participant code 992577. Please remember that although the public is welcome to listen to the meeting, no one is authorized to speak or participate unless recognized by the board chair. Although the Colcock Hall boardroom, located at 19 Bee Street in Charleston, will be open during this meeting, only limited seating will be available in order to encourage social distancing and prevent potential disease transmission.

The MUSC/MUHA Board of Trustees serves as separate bodies to govern the university and hospital, normally holding two days of committee and board meetings six times a year. For more information about the MUSC Board of Trustees, visit http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/leadership/board/index.html.

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About The Medical University of South Carolina

Founded in 1824 in Charleston, MUSC is the oldest medical school in the South as well as the state’s only integrated academic health sciences center with a unique charge to serve the state through education, research and patient care. Each year, MUSC educates and trains more than 3,000 students and nearly 800 residents in six colleges: Dental Medicine, Graduate Studies, Health Professions, Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy. The state’s leader in obtaining biomedical research funds, in fiscal year 2019, MUSC set a new high, bringing in more than $284 million. For information on academic programs, visit musc.edu.

As the clinical health system of the Medical University of South Carolina, MUSC Health is dedicated to delivering the highest quality patient care available, while training generations of competent, compassionate health care providers to serve the people of South Carolina and beyond. Comprising some 1,600 beds, more than 100 outreach sites, the MUSC College of Medicine, the physicians’ practice plan, and nearly 275 telehealth locations, MUSC Health owns and operates eight hospitals situated in Charleston, Chester, Florence, Lancaster and Marion counties. In 2019, for the fifth consecutive year, U.S. News & World Report named MUSC Health the No. 1 hospital in South Carolina. To learn more about clinical patient services, visit muschealth.org.

MUSC and its affiliates have collective annual budgets of $3.2 billion. The more than 17,000 MUSC team members include world-class faculty, physicians, specialty providers and scientists who deliver groundbreaking education, research, technology and patient care.