

Message from the Director, Kristen Renwick Monroe
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As the COVID-19 virus continues to spread, I wanted to say a word to members of the Ethics Center and to the UCI community more generally.

The uncertainty, scale and scope of what is unfolding around us seems almost inconceivable. It is difficult to comprehend how quickly life is changing. Earlier in the year, the COVID-19 was something happening far away. Today, faculty members are scrambling to figure out how to teach courses entirely online for the remainder of the year. Students' lives have been up-ended as they packed, said their tearful goodbyes and dealt with the stress of finding new places to live, new jobs to support themselves. Most staff members are working off-campus, often under trying circumstances, yet managing, with extreme good grace, somehow to keep the university running efficiently.

Throughout all of this turmoil and uncertainty, I have witnessed countless acts of kindness. Students helping other students, volunteers assisting with the move, and faculty and alumni generously offering money or places to live or sit while students take classes remotely or simply need to study. Neighbors, both local and from a distance, setting up phone trees to check in and ask if anyone needs food or medicine or just a good conversation to combat the loneliness of isolation.

Throughout the last few weeks, I have been struck most not by the uncertainty, the terrible sense of panic and fear, and human dislocation that can accompany a pandemic but rather by the compassion of my fellow human beings. I have seen quiet yet magnificent displays of thoughtfulness, decency, benevolence, and concern for others, and I have never been prouder to be a member of our community.

It is at times like this when the world looks to universities and scholars for reasoned discourse, objective discussion and scientific respect for evidence and facts. The quick and selfless thinking in California to minimize the harm done by the COVID-19 will be an inspiration to others, and a guide in the days to come.

To each of you, who has helped quietly to help others during these difficult times, I thank you for your excellent work, your kind-heartedness for those who are suffering the most, and your generosity in reaching out to help someone else. Together we will meet this challenge, if six to 10 feet apart.