

Dear Students, Family and Friends,

In just a few short days we'll be together, experiencing the excitement, pride and joy of Commencement 2009. With the celebration rapidly approaching, we wanted to take this opportunity to share information about our campus' response to the H1N1 (swine) flu outbreak.

UMass Amherst public health, medical and preparedness professionals, together with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC), have been closely monitoring developments since the virus first emerged. To date, no cases of H1N1 virus have been identified on the UMass Amherst campus.

However, in keeping with MDPH and CDC recommendations, UMass Amherst will be taking additional health precautions during Commencement events. Hand sanitizer stations will be available at all events; all portable restroom facilities will also be equipped with sanitizer. If you become ill while you are on campus, you can be seen at University Health Services (UHS). Call UHS, (413) 577-5000; the Triage Advice Nurse will help you determine the best course of care. During the undergraduate commencement ceremony, UHS also staffs a first aid station at McGuirk Stadium. Emergency personnel are on duty during all commencement ceremonies.

The UHS website, www.umass.edu/uhs, offers updated federal, state and campus-specific information about the H1N1 virus.

We understand the importance of this special time to you and your family and hope you will be able to join us on campus. However, to reduce the possibility of spreading illness, we request that those with flu-like symptoms observe public health guidelines and remain at home. UVC-TV, the campus television station, will be filming events and producing a keepsake DVD; for more information, visit the Commencement website, www.umass.edu/commencement/2009.

Congratulations on being part of Commencement 2009. We look forward to seeing you and to a weekend filled with memories!

Sincerely yours,

Robert C. Holub
Chancellor