ADAM HOWELL: Welcome to everybody, and thank you for joining us at our latest EA sponsored staff forum on working remotely. My name is Adam Howell. I'm the chair of the Employee Assembly for this year. And, again, I want to welcome you. And I hope you all get a lot of good information today regarding working remotely.

Now, we're going to get started really quickly. But I can't pass up an opportunity to plug the EA elections, which are being held right now. We're actually coming up on the last day of registration, which will be tomorrow at noon. So for those of you who are interested in becoming a staff community leader-- and we need your leadership so much right now because there's so much that is changing and evolving as a result of the COVID crisis and so many other things going on. We would love to have you.

Again, you should see a link to the information page about how to register for the Employee Assembly elections. And, again, we'd love to have you. So I didn't want to pass up this opportunity.

But again, that's not what we're here for. So I want to keep things moving. And I will go ahead and turn things over to Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer Mary Opperman. Mary, thank you so much as always for being here with us. And I'll give it over to you to get things going.

MARY OPPERMAN: Great, thank you, Adam. So, hello, everyone. Good afternoon. I hope you're doing well. This is-- I've lost count. I'm sorry. But this is one in a series of focused chats that we've been learning a lot from. And I think we've found the feedback and ideas that we're getting extremely helpful. So thank you all for that.

The topic today is working remotely. And I know you've heard me say this before, but the way that many of us are working remotely now is that we're working from our homes in a pandemic. That isn't necessarily the way that we would work remotely in a different circumstance, and so we'll want to keep reminding ourselves of that as we go through the conversations today.

I also wanted to just say one thing. I got feedback from a colleague who, after the last meeting, the last discussion, that he felt as though the comments about reactivating the campus left him, who is remote and will be staying remote at least for some period of time, feeling a little disappointed and feeling as though the comments made him feel like he really wasn't part of the campus. So if that was the reaction any of the rest of you had, I'm really sorry about that. That certainly was not my intention. We are reactivating campus, and we are preparing for the fall semester. And we'll each play our part from where it's best that we play it.

So with that there are two experts on the panel today. And I'm going to ask them to introduce themselves and say a few words, Linda Croll Howell followed by professor Brad Bell. Linda?

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: Hi. Good afternoon, everyone. And I first want to thank Adam, Hei Hei, and the rest of the EA for choosing this topic. I think remote work is a really important topic for us to be talking about. And I can say that we just closed out the latest COVID-19 employee survey, and there was just tremendous, tremendous feedback on remote work.

So I'll share a couple of stats with you because I'm a data person, and that's what I do-- in a minute. But first, I just want to talk a little bit about the team that I'm on. So I oversee a newer area called Employee Experience at Cornell. And we talked about it a couple of sessions ago when we were talking about virtual community that entails well-being, which is work life in partnership with the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program in the Wellness Program. And remote work was predominantly out of work life.

As Mary said, the way we used to look at remote work at Cornell was it was at an employee's convenience. They would ask could they work remotely. And then we'd go through this process and had plenty of time to plan, plenty of time to train, plenty of time to prepare. And there were some places that people were asked to work remote in different states and everything. But it was a very different remote work than the remote work we're in right now, where everybody is basically given 24 hours or so. Pick up everything you can. Get home and work remotely. So we're learning a lot from it.

This is an unprecedented time. This is very new to all of us. And that's one of the reasons why we reached out to ask you in the survey about how things are going, what we can learn. I wanted to let you know, we had over 4,200 responses to the survey. Ruth Katz on my team is painstakingly going through every single comment, and I'm reading several of them too. Mary's read some of them, because we really want to know how things are going for you. We really want to know what's working well, what issues people are having. And we really are using that to help guide us as we start to develop a remote work strategy going forward.

So we had a 70% response rate, which was great. I could say, overall, most people were relatively favorable about working remotely. The key challenges that we heard were around caregiving, and that's really balancing children, child care, and adult care with working. And one of the quick plugs I want to do around that is we do have a feedback form open right now for people who have caregiving challenges that is closing tomorrow. So if you haven't had a chance to fill that out, I guess you could do that because there's a team working on that right now and recommendations.

Another key area was around the blurring boundaries between work and home. We're hearing that loud and clear, so we're going to be working on some things around that. And then some around connectivity-- kind of spotty. Mary can attest to that. She's had her challenges on that too. So I just wanted to share that.

There is strong interest in continued remote work. And we are looking at a longer term strategy that college and unit leadership will be looking at within their areas as we progress forward. And a big concern that we really want to focus on is career development in remote work. And

I'll let our expert Brad Bell talk about some of maybe what he knows. He's been guiding us along the way too and sharing some of the relevant research and his experience working with other corporations.

One of the things I would also just like to quick plug too is that managers were thrown into this without a lot of training and support. And I know it's been extremely challenging for a lot of our managers. So we are launching a new series of manager supports. Tomorrow we're going to start with our first manager chat. And I would encourage you, if you are a manager and have not yet signed up for it to sign up for it. But there'll be more coming out to support managers and employees around remote work. Done. Brad?

BRAD BELL: Great, thanks, Linda. And thanks for having me join today's session. I'd like to start out by acknowledging the irony of doing this session on remote work from my office. This is actually my first week in the office as I start to prep for classes in the fall. So like all of you, I have been working remotely for many months.

I thought I'd just comment on two quick things, the first being around what do we see around remote work trends pre and during COVID? What's been interesting in studying this area is that we've really seen a steady increase in remote work over about the last decade, both in terms of the number of employees that work remotely, but also in the amount of time that people are spending working remotely. It used to be that full time remote work was really utilized by very few employees. But we've actually seen that increase quite a bit in recent years, even before COVID.

Obviously COVID has dramatically and suddenly accelerated these trends. And what's really interesting in talking to companies is that this natural experiment has really convinced many of them that remote work should be a part of their long term workforce strategy in one form or another. There was actually a recent survey done of company leaders. And 82% of those company leaders said they plan to offer at least some remote work part of the time going forward. And nearly 47% said they plan to offer full time remote work going forward. So I think what you're likely to see is these trends to continue, even after the immediate crisis has passed.

And I think some of that is obviously being driven by, again, the experiences that we've seen. In talking to a lot of company leaders, what I've heard is many of them say, well, this has gone a lot better than we could have ever have hoped for. You know, there's certainly been some bumps along the way, but productivity has been maintained. Things have been good.

There was also a recent survey done by 600 remote workers that looked at them across longitudinally between March and May and found that there was kind of this initial decline in things like satisfaction, engagement the first couple of weeks. But those quickly rebounded. And, in fact, we've seen a number of benefits. Stress is down. Engagement, in some cases, is up. So these results are encouraging and are leading companies to think about how we can utilize remote work going forward.

That being said, I would like to echo something Mary started with, which was this is not typical remote work. What we've all been experiencing the last several months is not the way that any organization would set up remote work by design. There's been a number of things that made it more challenging, for example having child care or elder care responsibilities, being just generally isolated. There is a risk of, when we work remotely becoming professionally isolated, but that's being compounded by the fact that we're all just socially isolated in general.

But at the same time there is also some things that made this easier. It's been a level playing field. Everybody has been working remotely. And one of the things research tells us, for example, is that when remote work employees-- when their supervisors work remotely they often have a more positive experience. So we've seen probably some of those benefits here. And we've also, at least in the short term, have just had to maintain the relationships that we've built in the office as opposed to building new relationships from scratch virtually, which we know can be challenging.

So all of this is to say that if you had a good experience or a bad experience, there's a lot of factors that might have contributed to that. And I think Linda and her team are really doing a nice job of being thoughtful about what remote work should look like for Cornell going forward beyond the crisis. Because we need to be careful to really give that a lot of thought and not just default to what we did the past few months. So again, thanks for having me and looking forward to conversation.

ADAM HOWELL: Well, thank you all. As always, we appreciate you joining us, giving us your time, your expertise, and getting out so much great information everybody. I just wanted to mention that as we have been doing recently, we're going to start with a few of our colleague staff question askers. And then we'll try to get to folks in the Q&A pod. That would be where you all if you have questions you'd like to submit to the panel, please put them in the Q&A box. And we will try to get to as many as we can.

And for that, I will now turn it over to our Executive Vice Chair of the Employee Assembly, Hei Hei Depew.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Hi, everyone. So we have three participants that we've pulled from Qualtrics. Altogether we've received over 50 Qualtrics responses. So I'm going to begin with Julie Newhouse who responded to the question, "What would you like us to know and consider related to working remotely?" And, Julie, I'm going to turn this over to you.

JULIE NEWHOUSE: Yes, thank you. So most of us are not working with ideal setups. We're working on a dining room tables that aren't the right height for keyboarding. Some people may not be using ideal desk chairs, things like that. And I worry that, like me, other people are also beginning to feel the effects of a not very ergonomically correct work environment. And I also want to acknowledge that given the current financial constraints, it would be a challenge to resolve things like that.

I don't really know that the consultants who help us with musculoskeletal injuries are really able to help people in this situation that we're in. But I also know that nobody wants to hurt themselves either and end up with an injury or soreness anywhere. So that's sort of a thing that's on my mind.

MARY OPPERMAN: Thank you, Julie. And I think it's on other people's minds as well. Linda, do you want to start us off?

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: Yeah, absolutely. So if you go onto the HR website, there's a COVID resources for employees page. And hopefully you'll get sent that link. There's a few options for you right up front.

The first thing is there's a webinar that's been recorded by Todd Baker and Michelle Artibee that talks a little bit about ways you can set up your home office and things that you should think about in setting up your home office. There's also a tip sheet, if you don't have a lot of time, that you could probably read within about five minutes that gives you some basic tips. And the other thing is that the consulting group that was always available to come to your office to do consults in your workspace is now available for you, as well, to do consults for you virtually. So I've asked for those links to be put up so people can see them. But they are on the HR website on the employee COVID site.

And they've gotten pretty good at doing it. I know it was a little bit rocky in the first-- as everybody was trying to learn. But they've gotten pretty good at doing it. And one of my favorite shows on HGTV was always Design on a Dime. And I think that there are sometimes some creative ways that people can set up things that maybe will just make it a little bit more comfortable for you that doesn't necessarily have a lot of expense associated with it.

So, for example, I know somebody who wants a standing desk, and they took concrete cinder blocks, and piled them up, and put a board on top of it so that they could put their laptop there when they want to stand. Those are the kinds of things that-- there's creative ways. But I think if you set up a consult they'll be able to give you some-- at least a few really good tips that will help with that.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Moving on to the next response. In regards to the question, "What would you like us to know and consider related to working remotely," Jen Zunino-Smith submitted a response, so I'm going to turn that over to her.

JEN ZUNINO-SMITH: Thank you very much, Hei Hei. My response was I did not think my program could run from home and felt very burdened about having to make this work. However, I proudly found that the use of Cornell Box, Zoom, Microsoft 360, and more played a critical role in my success and ability to do so. These are resources I did not use before.

So I do run what's called The Stormwater Consortium of Rockland County, here. We are a consortium of 24 municipalities, municipal representatives, and engineers. We are working on

two grants of $400,000 and the record keeping and the communication that has to go on, it's just critical. There's audit material, we have to work with accounting-- a lot of work. So I did not think my program could run remotely.

Initially, I went home. I was saving all of my documentation to my computer, to my hard drive. But then I thought, what would happen if I wake up one day and my computer has crashed? So then I discovered Cornell Box. Actually, the IT person at our office, Cornell Cooperative Extension Rockland County, was talking how we could copy our files to Box. So I copied my files to Box. I'm now working completely off Cornell Box.

It's been very successful because I can share links. I've also uploaded my time sheets onto Cornell Box. And since it's Microsoft 360 Live, I can continually update my time sheet. And my supervisor has access to it. So the Cornell Box has been just amazing, an amazing place to remotely access your files, not worry about losing them, not worry about your computer crashing. Again, I'm completely working remotely now off Cornell Box. You can share files.

Cornell Dropbox has been extremely helpful. We have Cornell Dropbox. I can just send a large file to somebody who may be having some trouble accessing Box or may not be familiar with putting a password in for Box. And Zoom, the Zoom platform itself-- way better in my opinion than Webex and any other platform. I've been asked numerous times, can you please host a meeting for us using your Zoom? And I was happy to do so. And it was successful.

I've also been able to hold trainings that I've never been able-- because of the lack of disruptions at work, because we do get disruptions, I was able to create training and make it publicly accessible. And I had many attendants. I'm finding my meeting attendance is higher, many thanks to Zoom. My training was successful, many thanks to Zoom. I'm confident that my files, which are critical files, are adequately hosted and adequately available thanks to Cornell Box. Again, Cornell Dropbox, just shout out-- The resources through the university have been incredible.

I also work with an ArcGIS online platform because our grants are to map the stormwater conveyance system throughout our county. Cornell, I can actually access ArcGIS online through Cornell. So everything is remote. It's just really amazing. It's made a big difference. I did not think it could happen. It probably could not have happened without Cornell's resources.

MARY OPPERMAN: Jennifer, thank you. First of all, I just want to reflect on the fact that you kind of pushed past your own concerns and reluctance to find a strategy to go forward, so kudos to you.

JEN ZUNINO-SMITH: Thank you.

MARY OPPERMAN: Brad, did you want to reflect on some of the evolution, if you will, of how Jennifer came to this point and anything else you'd like to add?

BRAD BELL: Sure. I think going back to my opening comments about some of the trends of remote work, I think Jennifer's experience kind of underlies some of those trends I was talking about with the increase in remote work. I think a lot of that has been enabled by the types of technologies that she was talking about, that have enabled a broader range of employees to work successfully from home.

There's always been jobs that could be done remotely. For example, someone working in a call center, for example, they could do that from their home. But there is a lot of jobs that either because of the type of interaction that they required or the access to data in secure ways that they required were somewhat limited. And I think the types of tools, whether it's Box, Zoom, so on, has really enabled that and has really opened up remote work to a broader segment of the worker population.

Certainly there are workers that need to continue to be in the office or on site for one reason or another. But there's many that can successfully do the work from home.

MARY OPPERMAN: Linda?

JEN ZUNINO-SMITH: May I add just one more thing?

MARY OPPERMAN: Sure.

JEN ZUNINO-SMITH: OK. So, there's also the challenge of when I was in the office I was constantly printing. And so when I came home-- I have actually-- this is a very old tablet. And all I did was upload an app from my scanner. So I would scan something to it. And now I have-- instead of paper I have this tablet to read off of. So I'm also not printing hardly ever. --just something else I wanted to add. Thank you.

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: I would just say, the one thing I keep saying is if there's any way we can make lemonade out of lemons, we should try to and become a stronger organization through this experience. Right? That's what growth is about. And one of the comments that we keep hearing is, the first few weeks were really, really tough for people. But we've had a couple people say, now I kind of consider myself a Zoom expert when I couldn't even set up a Zoom meeting before. So I think this really has forced us all to grow and develop and learn and become incredibly-- the resourceful, creative, community we are, which I think is great.

And one thing I would add is, thank you for noting those tools. And that's great because one of the things as we develop our strategy, we want to know what tech tools are out there to really help people in their work. And I would throw out to the community who's listening, if there are tools that Jennifer didn't mention that you have found really helpful for your work area, please send them to me because we're trying to take a look at what we're all learning and what we can share with each other.

JEN ZUNINO-SMITH: Qualtrics was great as well, because after I did training I could then offer a survey by Qualtrics instead of paper. So it's just worked, all over it has worked.

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: Thanks.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Moving on to our final staff participant, Lauren Simpson, in regards to the question, "What would your ideal work situation resemble if you have the option of continuing to work remotely in some all capacity. So I'm going to turn it over to you, Lauren Simpson.

LAUREN SIMPSON: Thank you. And thank you for having me. I responded that as a young single who is entering only her second year of work at Cornell, and I live in a small apartment by myself, that the thought of continuing to have to work from home for such a long period of time is really hard on a mental health perspective. I do think that Zoom meetings have been a huge help in terms of providing interaction during this period, but I don't think that the virtual interaction is totally a substitute for face-to-face interaction. It's human nature for us to need to socialize. And working from home all the time completely eliminates this, not to mention that I've struggled with keeping the same level of productivity from home that I do in an office setting.

So I completely understand that we need to de-densify campus, and having everyone on campus right now is just not realistic in the time that we're living in. But I think that if there was an option for employees to be back on campus at least several times a week, whether that's in shifts or however it would be safest, I think that's something that should be considered and would really help from a social interaction and productivity standpoint.

MARY OPPERMAN: Lauren, first of all, let me thank you for saying that. Because I actually think a lot of people are really struggling with the isolation that this whole situation has created. Right? So work in our-- I don't even know what normal is any more. But in normal, the way we thought about it before this year, was a whole-- work had a place in our socialization. And to your point, when you're new to a community, it has an even bigger part in your socialization. But it wasn't the only thing.

Now as everything has sort of brought us inward, that's particularly difficult for people that don't have other available, physical, social networks. And so I think the impact on mental health is an incredibly important element here. I'm going to turn it over to Linda and Brad, but I do want to say we are really trying to keep the densification of the campus at a level that we feel is safe. And now as the students are coming back in, we have a lot of moving pieces.

But although this has gone on longer than some of us thought it would, this isn't going to last forever. And to your point, Lauren, there are people who, if given the choice, would come in maybe part time or maybe more. And we hope we get to a health situation soon where that's possible. But let me turn it over, maybe Linda and then Brad.

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: Lauren, I'm sorry that this has been your experience on this. And I know we've been very concerned about community members that are exactly where you are. We've even had some employees that started after this started, so they've never had a chance to really, other than maybe in their interview process, meet anyone on campus in person too. And we know that that's got to be extremely, extremely hard.

We're looking at ways that we can try to build some social virtual communities. So within the next month or two, we should be rolling out some things around that to at least be able to connect that way. I know some people are looking at the possibility of quarantine pods or quarantine groups where they find another person or another family who have commitment to each other around how they're going to be quarantining just so that they can have someone to socialize with. Not necessarily saying that would work for you in particular, but that's something we've been hearing from some community members. Some families are doing that just because it does look like it's going to be a while longer.

You know, one thing that I might suggest is to make sure that your HR person knows so that when we do move to a place that maybe we can have more people on campus, you can be at the top of the list of one of those who interested in that, just so that they're aware of that as a possibility. And as we're thinking through our long term remote work strategy, I think one of the most popular options when we were asking people what their interest was was that three days at home and one to two days in the office. Because they felt like they'd figured out how to be really effective and get a lot done at home, but they really missed the team connection and the brainstorming in person and everything.

And so I think it will be a different place when we do move to that. Because even if someone's predominantly home, they can still meet a co-worker at [INAUDIBLE] or offer a meeting. Or they still have their social life on the weekends. So it is something we're very concerned about. And certainly, if people out there have suggestions for us, please let us know. We're all learning as we go along. And I would love to hear other suggestions of things that maybe people have tried that have worked for them. So thanks for the question.

LAUREN SIMPSON: Thank you.

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: Brad, did you want to add here?

BRAD BELL: Yeah, I would just add I think going back to my opening comments about how would we design remote work, I mean, one of the things we've learned is it's not a one size fits all work arrangement. Right? I mean, in an ideal world, what we want to look at is is it a good fit for the person? How does it fit the person? How does it fit the work that they're doing? And how does it fit within the larger context of the unit or organization which they're working in?

Remote work is not a great fit for everyone, given their personal circumstances, given their personality, their need for interaction. It's obviously not a great fit for every type of work. Although we've seen where it's broadening, it has broader applicability. And depending on how

our units are set up and our teams and so forth, it may be a better or worse fit. So, again, we're in a situation where we haven't had that luxury to really sit back and identify where it fits well. But I know that's one thing Linda and her team are thinking about over the long term, how do we really make those design decisions thoughtfully.

Another thing I would add, again, design is-- we know that isolation is a risk for remote workers. And, again, in an ideal world, what we'd try to do is set up things like communities and other opportunities for employees to engage with not only other remote workers, but also people in the office. And again, since we had to kind of rush into this, we haven't necessarily had the chance to develop some of those support mechanisms, which hopefully will be in place when this becomes a longer term strategy.

MARY OPPERMAN: Can I just say one more thing to Lauren's point? So one thing that there's been some press about and some research on is the impact on people when they're new to a job. So one of the things that-- I watched a webinar. And one of the people who was very new was talking to someone who is a little bit longer in the job. And the person who had been there for a few years longer was saying, when I was in my learning mode about this project, I just walked to the other cubicle and asked a person who had done something similar. Now it feels so much harder to learn the things that I don't know.

And so for those of you who are relatively new in your roles, I hope you are spending time with your supervisor and asking the question, who can I engage with to learn more about how I might go about this task or responsibility? It doesn't always have to be your supervisor, but until you know the people around you-- and so to Linda's point, we had people come right at the shutdown. They don't even know their colleagues yet. Your supervisor should be helpful in making those collegial connections for you. It helps a bit with the sense that you're kind of flailing about a bit to figure out how to get something done, which, in the work setting you would have just walked over and asked somebody about.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. So we're going to talk all over between the Q&A and also the submitted Qualtrics. I'm going to begin with a comment made in the Q&A from Jenn Michael. She indicated, "The reduction of stress from commuting and racing home 45 minutes after work to my family has been tremendous for me and my productivity. I appreciate all that Cornell has done to help us transition and continue to be productive from wherever we are. Thanks to HR and the leadership." So that's just some gratitude.

And then I want to move over to a question that we've received through the Qualtrics. This was submitted anonymously. This person does not want to be identified here. In response to the question, "What would you like us to know and consider related to working remotely?" The response was this, "I really enjoy working remotely because it provides me the time and space to focus. And the lack of a commute gives me better work-life balance. My concerns about working remotely are, one, career growth. Will I limit my opportunities in the future if I'm fully remote? And two, if supervisors decide who gets to work remotely, what happens if I get a new

supervisor who doesn't support remote work or my supervisor changes their mind about remote work?"

MARY OPPERMAN: Linda, do you want to get us started?

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: I can totally get us started. I think that's an excellent question around career development. And, Brad, maybe after I'm done you can talk about what the research says around career development for remote workers. So it is something that we're really keeping our eye on.

And one of the things that we're going to be doing as we go forward is starting to track people who are working remotely and take a look at career progression between those working remotely and those who are not, so that if we start to see anything that looks like they're falling behind to get in there and be able to do things, interventions, to try to help prevent that from happening. Because I know that's been a really big concern that we've heard from employees. It was in the survey many times.

And we're going to be looking at what we can do to be designing tools and everything. So for example, the Workday system has some tools that are career development oriented that are really more going to be online-based. So hopefully that will help with facilitating and connecting people to get exposure, make connections, make communications. So we're working really closely with the Workday team in human resources to look at what tools we can put in place to help them to track and measure that.

BRAD BELL: Yeah, just on the research, I think it's a very legitimate concern. If you look at what research tells us around remote work, across the board we generally see positive benefits. Productivity is usually the same or higher. Satisfaction goes up. Stress goes down. Work, family conflict goes down. The one red flag is around career development and career progression. What we find is that remote workers relative to similarly performing peers in the office tend to be promoted more slowly than their office space counterparts. And there's a lot of reasons for that. It might be out of sight, out of mind.

I've also worked with organizations that have actually struggle because they've had people working remotely, and they might offer them a promotion but it requires them to come back in the office. And people don't want to give up their remote work, so they pass up promotions and different career development opportunities. But I think the steps that Linda's talking about in terms of manager training, these types of things are really critical for managers to understand how to evaluate employee performance accurately when they're working remotely.

The other thing I would say is, all that research was done in a very different environment, right, before all this. And I think, again, this experience has debunked a lot of the myths around remote work, that employees can't be engaged. They can't be productive. All these things that some managers might have held prior to this, I think it's opened their eyes. And it's also created an environment where remote work is more normative than idiosyncratic. And I think all those

things will hopefully reverse some of those trends that we've seen around career development and career progression that were probably rooted in some inaccurate perceptions of remote work in the past.

MARY OPPERMAN: So I do want to just comment on the other part of our colleague's point, which is what happens? So I'm sort of leaning into this. I have these concerns. But what if I get to a space where this is really working for me, and I get a new supervisor and it changes? And that's an understandable concern. When we get new supervisors, lots of things change. And this could be one of them. And so what I would say is, it's probably really important to understand what the expected outcomes or deliverables are for your role. So that if there is a press to change the remote work situation that is concerning to you, it will help you to understand and ask the questions about why.

I think we often find ourselves having just gotten everything balanced out, and then something changes. And so in the case of your work, it's important to know what the deliverables and expectations are and to know, if those are going to be changing, how they're going to be changing. I don't know. Linda, did you want to add anything to that?

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: Yeah. I think one of the other pieces-- and I think that's right on. One of the pieces of research, and, Brad, you can elaborate on this, is that they're seeing differences in environments where one or two members of a team are working remotely as compared to-- it's much more widespread where the manager might even be working remotely some of the time and everything.

And so I think that in the past, as Brad said, where it was remote by someone requesting because maybe they had a caregiving thing that they were trying to balance a little bit better in the evening-- I think now with it being more normalized, I think it's going to become a situation where it's not going to be as much of a manager saying, am I making an exception for you? But more, if a new manager comes into a work group, it's very possible that everyone on the team has that arrangement already in place, and it's working really smoothly and everything. So I just think because it's going to be less exception-based and more normalized, that we'll probably have a bit different experience around that. Mary, I don't know your thoughts on that.

MARY OPPERMAN: Well, as is so often the case, it's hard to know.

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: It's hard to know.

MARY OPPERMAN: But I think, to Brad's point, I think a lot of areas are realizing that they can get their work done effectively in a variety of ways. That the way we've always done it kind of broke in many cases. And we found that we can keep on going and use creative strategies. So hopefully that broadening of our mindset of the way we've normally done things will continue.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. I'm going to combine a question received from Qualtrics and also the Q&A. The question asked from Qualtrics by Gary Gabbison is in response to, "What would

you like us to know and consider related to working remotely?" His response is, "Since the work and home life have blended together, I feel I'm constantly on. And it feels draining. Maybe perhaps thoughts or best practices on dealing with feeling like I'm always on." And also to add to that, a question through the Q&A from Anne Marie Sheridan was, "Where should we direct suggestions of what has worked well?"

MARY OPPERMAN: So I'm going to let Linda take this. But I do want to say, I think this is a significant issue. Even for those who generally are comfortable in remote work, is that there are no boundaries unless you create them and stick with them. And that, when you feel a sense of commitment and a sense of loyalty to your work, can sometimes be difficult. I'd also say, sorry, my dog's drinking water. If you can hear that, I'm sorry.

I guess, I would also say that this is a particularly remarkable time. And so for some people their work plates are just overflowing with different things. And that causes the sense that you can't keep up. But as always is the case, that we all sort of have an amount of productivity in us. And so we how we met that out and get ourselves through a week and take care of ourselves is really important. So, Linda, I'm going to turn it over to you.

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: Yeah, as I mentioned, I think that was one of the biggest challenges that came up in the survey results that we just got back was that blurring and blending of boundaries. And we're going to be working on some tips and guidance and suggestions around that both for employees and for managers. And one of the things that-- Microsoft just got through releasing some research that they had done on their organization. And they said that they noticed a change in how people were having meetings. That they're having many more shorter meetings now with Zoom. And I think it's moved us to a place where people-- and I think especially when we first started, there was a lot of meetings going on as everyone was trying to connect and check in and everything.

So hopefully a little bit over time that will start to normalize a little bit. But I think there are some other tips that we'll be coming out with that might help around that because it really was identified as one of the key challenges people are experiencing right now. So more to come on that. Around where you can send suggestions, feel free to send them directly to my email. My net ID is llc36@cornell.edu. Please feel free to send them to me. I would love to hear your suggestions.

And, like I said, we are reading-- when I say we, Ruth Katz and some others in HR, we've kind of divided them-- are reading every single comment and spending a lot of time digesting them and thinking through how we can do the best we can to address as many of them as possible as we design our approach going forward. So we really do value your input in this. We're all learning together.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. One quick final question from the Q&A. "Related to Bradford's recent statements on career advancement, are you thinking about proactive ways or policies to

make sure that career advancement doesn't stall for employees during this period particularly given that caregiving still falls primarily to women?"

MARY OPPERMAN: So Linda, I think we've kind of touched on this with a question that we got before, but we are trying to look broadly at all of the issues that we are facing in terms of career advancement and the impact of the current environment on people due to caregiving and other priorities that they are trying to juggle in a very difficult time. So we agree this is something that we need to keep front and center. Linda, do you want to add here?

LINDA CROLL HOWELL: Yeah. I would disagree. We're very aware of it. And I think it's going to be a piece of what we add into the management education around that. And whether it's caregiving or other things that are going on, we all have a lot more on us than we-- this is unprecedented. Very few people still around have been through a pandemic to this scale. And so even if it's not caregiving, it could be that you're alone and having a hard time. It could be a number of things. So I think right now we're just asking managers to be aware that we're all going through a lot of tough things. And the importance of giving people a little bit of space to talk through those things and support.

We still are offering a lot of our trainings and everything virtually, very quickly. So hopefully there's those kinds of things. Hopefully managers are still giving people good projects to stretch and grow them. I know I've gotten some nice growth ones over the last few months to help them continue growing. But I think that we'll be tracking data to see how things are going. But we don't have any really good answers immediately on that other than to say, let's all try to be generous and support each other through this. Because I think we all have different days that are tough days for us as we go through this. And managers, I think we're talking a lot about well being with them.

ADAM HOWELL: All right. Well, thank you all. Unfortunately, we're out of time for this forum. But I, again, want to offer my sincere thanks to all of our panelists. Mary, as always for being with us, and all of our staff, colleague questioners. We really appreciate you being here. And then one more thing, I just want to, of course, give a shout out to the Office of the Assemblies. Gina Giambattista and Wendy Treat, thank you so much for all that you do. And I'll turn it over to you, Mary, if you've got some final thoughts for us to wrap up with.

MARY OPPERMAN: Just quickly because I know that we're over time, first of all, of course, thank you to the EA for their unwavering commitment to all of us and the staff community. Thank you to the Office of the Assemblies and to our panelists Linda Croll Howell and Professor Brad Bell. I did want to just also shout out to our essential workers who have been on campus. So we've been talking. This, the purpose of today was about working remotely. But as we're all aware, we've had people that were here throughout the stay-at-home orders. And they continue to be. So thank you to them for all they're doing for the campus.

As you know, we're moving into the fall semester. A reminder that masks and other hygiene are simply-- they're essential. So there are tried and true things we've been saying from the

beginning. Wear your mask. Physically distance as much as you can. Inside wear your masks at all times except in the cases that you are truly in a private space. And if you're not sure, just keep your mask on if you're on campus. Wash your hands. Keep your hands away from your face. Those things will help us as the community shifts and changes.

Ask questions if you have them. I have a pretty vibrant inbox. And now you have Linda's email too. So ask your questions. There is no such thing as a bad question. As Linda said, we haven't been through this before. And keep in mind, we are getting through this. We are getting through this. It is difficult, but we are doing it. And we're doing it because of all of you. So thank you all very much, and have a great day.