97th AAS Annual Meeting Has Been Cancelled

The AAS Steering Committee met in emergency session on Thursday morning, March 12th, to discuss the evolving situation surrounding COVID-19 and AAMU’s request that we cancel the 97th AAS Annual Meeting to be held on their campus, March 18-20th. Several universities have restricted domestic travel and curtailed face-to-face classes and medical personnel have advised some senior Academy members not to travel to group meetings. We believe it is prudent for the safety and health of all those who would be in attendance and their communities that the 97th AAS Annual Meeting be cancelled and the Steering Committee unanimously approved this action.

As a result of this decision to cancel the meeting:

- All submitted abstracts will be published in the Journal of the Alabama Academy of Science as if the presentations were made
- There will be no attempt to reschedule this meeting at a future date
- Carmichael, AAS Fellow and Wright Gardner Awards will be made and those individuals will be recognized with the 2021 awardees at the 98th Annual Meeting Banquet
- All paid registration, banquet, and lunch ticket fees for the cancelled 97th meeting will be refunded.
- The Local Arrangements Committee will contact the two hotels to do a blanket cancellation of reservations and in a subsequent email we will confirm this has occurred.
- The AAS Executive Committee Meeting scheduled for March 18th has been cancelled and will move to a virtual format at a future date
- AJAS/Gorgas Competitions will occur virtually, but not on the AAMU campus.

Please note that the AJAS/Gorgas competitions are not being canceled, but will occur on Friday, March 20th in a virtual format for both students and judges. There will be no face-to-face competitions at AAMU. More information on the virtual format/schedule for AJAS/Gorgas students and associated competition judges will be forthcoming.

The Steering Committee greatly regrets having to make this decision but believes this is the right decision to make. Please bear with us as we dismantle what was a well-planned annual meeting by a very dedicated and enthusiastic AAMU Local Arrangements Committee.
Please stay well and follow recommended precautions you can take to prevent the spread of viral respiratory diseases:

- If you have not done so, it is important at this time to get your flu shot.
- Wash hands (palms, back of hands, between fingers) often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (length of time it takes to sing Happy Birthday to yourself twice). See video https://youtu.be/cViNneQbPyA If you use hand sanitizer, make sure it contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with anyone with respiratory symptoms.
- When greeting others, do so without shaking hands and making personal contact.
- Stay home while you are sick and avoid contact with others
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces with isopropyl alcohol.
- Stay healthy: eat a balanced diet, get rest, avoid stress.

With sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks to all those who worked so hard on the planning of this meeting.