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Amy
Pierce

Apr 10, 2020 9:42 AM

[Amy Pierce](#)

Hello,

I work in New Orleans, where it leads the nation in COVID-19 deaths per capita, and live in Jefferson Parish, which is right behind New Orleans in the number of COVID-19 positive cases. We all know someone that has either died and/or battled this virus. Last week I witnessed a department head processing the news that one of his workers just died from COVID-19 and he was close to retirement. To say anxiety is high is an understatement. As a leader I must keep a calm presence because my staff and others at work are looking at me closely. I in turn am looking at them closely too. It has always been a priority to keep morale up, but in days like this it is crucial. Our culture is very different in New Orleans. We are very social and affectionate group of people. We don't shake hands we give hugs. We throw a celebration for anything so that we can get together. Keeping our social distance has been a struggle and I have to remind others why it is necessary. At work we come together in small groups while keeping our distance and through video conferencing. It is very important to check in with your staff everyday. I also remain in regular contact with my researchers as they are anxious as well. We have not required any researchers to euthanize their animals but some have to keep their colonies manageable while they are working remotely. They are anxious for my wellbeing and the wellbeing of my staff, but they are also anxious about their research. Many of their animals are transgenic and not available anywhere else. If we are not able to care for their animals this would set them back significantly in their research. I think many of us are experiencing PTSD because of what we went through with Hurricane Katrina.

I approach every day as a new day. It helps.

Take care everyone!
Amy

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Original Message:
Sent: 04-09-2020 05:54:07 AM
From: Amy Ingraham
Subject: What is it like working in high COVID-19 areas