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Omega Responds to Economic & Social Impact of the Pandemic by Pivoting Business Model to Serve With Greater Impact

Premiere Learning Destination Suspends 2020 Gatherings to Protect Public Safety & to Develop New Programs for a Resilient Future

RHINEBECK, NY— [Omega Institute for Holistic Studies](#), a leading nonprofit in New York’s Hudson Valley that has provided lifelong learning opportunities to more than 1M people since 1977, today announced they will postpone hosting programs on their Rhinebeck campus until 2021. Omega’s commitment to protect the well-being of its staff, faculty, participants, and the larger community is central in the decision, as is the need to adhere to New York’s phased approach and timeline for re-opening businesses in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This is the most challenging yet necessary decision Omega has ever had to make. The yearning to get back to normal is natural, but gathering places like ours have a responsibility to put safety first,” said Omega CEO Robert “Skip” Backus, who has been with the nonprofit for more than 35 years.

Despite the temporary closure of its physical campus, Omega is taking bold steps to ramp up online learning, build digital community, and leverage partnerships to reach a wider global audience with fewer barriers to access than ever before. Omega’s leadership team will also focus on energizing the 2021 campus experience, to bring some of the most insightful and hopeful voices for healing from trauma and grief, stoking creativity, reimagining personal and professional futures, and reinvigorating the culture.

“There is a profound opportunity to learn from the pandemic,” said Backus. “As we turn towards the recovery, Omega is committed to bringing forward critical conversations and teachings – programs that will help people gain the skills to open their minds and hearts, and develop resilience, wisdom, and courage. Developing these kinds of inner skills leads us outward into more meaningful connections with all people, all of life, and to the planet itself.”

Through partnerships and technology, the organization hopes to further scale its impact and advance solutions to some of humanity’s most pressing problems. Online offerings aimed at uplifting the human spirit and providing strength and inspiration for these unprecedented times have already begun, including [conversations with top teachers](#), [online courses](#), [a podcast](#), the [Omega Online Community](#), and [more](#).

“We are grateful to our teachers for rallying and to our participants for their flexibility and interest in having a virtual Omega experience. At a time when the wisdom of our teachers is so vitally needed, we are thrilled to offer new options,” said Backus.

However, Omega’s decision to pause in-person events is not without risk. The organization estimates a multimillion dollar fiscal deficit, posing a very real threat to the nonprofit’s future, and an impact to the many farms, vendors, and suppliers they work with regionally. This comes

on the heels of serious cost-cutting measures Omega has already taken, including reducing staff salaries and hours, and implementing furloughs. The organization is determined to overcome the hardship, and is launching a special fundraising campaign to enable Omega to carry forward its mission to “awaken the best in the human spirit.” Constituents interested in making a donation are encouraged to visit eOmega.org/givetoday, or email development@eOmega.org for more information.

For more information visit eOmega.org, and follow Omega on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Pinterest.

About Omega Institute for Holistic Studies

Founded in 1977, Omega Institute for Holistic Studies is the nation’s most trusted source for wellness and personal growth. As a nonprofit organization, Omega offers diverse and innovative educational experiences that inspire an integrated approach to personal and social change. Located on 250 acres in the beautiful Hudson Valley, Omega welcomes more than 23,000 people to its workshops, conferences, and retreats in Rhinebeck, New York, and at exceptional locations around the world. eOmega.org

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