

Nearly 500 Clemson students in quarantine

BY RILEY MORNINGSTAR
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CLEMSON — As Clemson University wraps up its first week of successful saliva-based COVID-19 testing, nearly 500 students are quarantined or in isolation around campus.

In an update to the campus community Friday afternoon, university president Jim Clements said a professor in the bioengineering department worked with colleagues from the University of South Carolina and the Medical University of South Carolina over the summer to develop a “highly accurate and inexpensive saliva-based” test. A testing lab is up and operational to process the results.

“The lab just completed its first week of operations, and we are aiming to scale up capacity considerably over the next month,” Clements said. “We expect this lab to contribute significantly to our testing efforts and hope we also eventually can help support community testing needs. This lab also will be a valuable research and training asset for the university and help us

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become even more competitive for research grants.”

For the week of Oct. 3, Clemson reported 360 positive cases and 480 students in isolation/quarantine housing provided by the university. A total of 5,666 tests were administered over the week, giving the university a 6.4 percent positive rate.

There have been 3,400 cumulative positive virus cases among students since testing

began June 5, according to the school’s tracking dashboard.

Clements alerted the campus community in an effort to keep the case count down over the next few weeks.

“We continue to see increased activity across our locations and are starting to settle into a new routine that includes dealing with the realities of COVID-19 as part

entertained with work, and I’m a big sports guy, too, so I’ve brought my PlayStation up and



Wylie

just been watching stuff on my PlayStation and computer,” he said. “It hasn’t been too bad, honestly.”

Wylie told The Journal that Clemson workers provide two meals a day around noon and also provided a box of perishable goods at the beginning of the mandated quarantine. The university also provided a microwave in Wylie’s suite. He said he believed Clemson has “done a lot better” with its COVID-19 procedures than the University of South Carolina, which had to manage its own small outbreak at the beginning of this fall semester in Columbia.

“Whenever we started, I thought it was just going to be like a burger or something every meal,” Wylie said. “I thought it was going to be something along those lines, but they’ve actually done a pretty good job with the variety of meals.”

of our daily lives,” he said. “The next week or two, however, will be especially important in our effort to keep the number of COVID-19 cases to a manageable level.”

The school previously said it had 650 spaces for quarantine and isolation, which doesn’t count the

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Clemson University president

possibility of students staying in their own housing, on or off campus. If Clemson were to reach the 650-space count, see an increase in workforce infections and fail to provide consistent testing capacity and care, it could trigger changes to operations.

Pierson Wylie, a sophomore civil engineering major from Columbia, said he went into isolation after his roommate tested positive for COVID-19 and was moved to quarantine housing at Thornhill Villages. Wylie said he hadn’t tested positive for the virus and was feeling fine on Tuesday.

“It’s honestly not been too bad. I’ve kept myself pretty well