



**Remarks by Francis Suarez
The Tribute to Mayors Series**

June 15, 2020

Francis Suarez: From the moment that I found out that I was infected with COVID, it was sort of a surreal experience. I got the call. I think it was March 13th in the morning. And the doctor said, you know, I was trying to reach you last night just to let you know that you're positive. I was shocked. I mean everybody who had tested with me that day was negative. I know I had been with a delegation of, you know, members of this foreign delegation for two days, a couple of hours. There were apparently several people that got infected in that delegation, but I had no expectation. I was completely asymptomatic.

So I had to immediately of course go into quarantine. Thanks to this new world that we're in. I know some people think that the sort of new normal is sort of an overused cliché in the last few months, but this new normal that we find ourselves in today -- you know, we would normally be giving this award in person. But these new platforms that we have now, where we are able to be virtually anywhere, allowed me to be

able to battle COVID-19 and at the same time be able to serve the citizens of my community.

I was able to do that while at the same time doing a diary which allowed me to share the experience with the entire world really. I got text messages from as far as Canada and Australia of people who were watching the diary entries and had a sense of hope that, if I was okay, that they would be okay. Most people at that time were on the other side of the aisle. They were trying to get tested. We were worried about whether there would be enough tests available. It was a very trying time for myself personally and for our city, but I'm very fortunate that we were able to pull through and that after the 18th day of quarantine I was able to come out healthy. And I've been healthy ever since.