**Michigan Tech, Houghton County COVID-19 Cases Rising**

September 2, 2020

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As Michigan Technological University begins to reopen and start their fall of 2020 semester, the rise of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 in both the Michigan Tech community and the greater Houghton County community are rising. In the past week, a number which had been stable at around fifty cases in the area has since risen to 86 confirmed cases in the area according to the New York Times, with Michigan Tech reporting 9 cases within the student body as of this Tuesday.

Michigan Technological University, which has been welcoming students back to the Houghton County area and into the residence halls it has on campus since the week of August 17th, has run 1,932 tests in the past fourteen days, and has been working with the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department to do contract tracing for any Tech-related positive test, according to the university’s website containing their testing statistics.

As this number continues to rise, the Houghton County community faced its first COVID-related death on August 28th and is the second death within the five-county community that the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department monitors. On the same day this second death was reported by Houghton County’s local newspaper, the *Keweenaw Report*, said newspaper also reported a potential exposure site to be the Houghton Theta Tau-Beta chapter, saying that it may have been spread during parties held at the chapter August 24th and 25th where social distancing and mask protocols were not followed. As testing continues, only time will tell the effects this has for the spread of COVID among the Michigan Tech community, and the greater Houghton County community at large.