

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

Feb. 2, 2021

CONTACT: Candi Churchill, Executive Director, United Faculty of Florida  
[candi.churchill@floridaaea.org](mailto:candi.churchill@floridaaea.org)**UF faculty, staff and students to ‘Speak Out’ at ‘Faces of the Pandemic’ news conference on Wednesday***Leader of the nation’s largest union, the NEA, to participate in virtual event*

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — University of Florida (UF) faculty, graduate teaching assistants, staff and students will describe their experiences – and challenges – during the spring 2021 semester at a virtual Speak Out and news conference at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2. [Becky Pringle, president of the National Education Association](#), will be a special guest speaker.

This event is a personal experience-based follow-up to a Speak Out event conducted in fall 2020 that defined specific concerns and demands regarding the UF Face-to-Face Teaching Mandate for spring semester 2021. Many of these demands were — and continue to be — minimized or denied by UF.

Media are invited to attend this virtual event, which will be available as both a Zoom meeting and by livestream. We request Zoom registration and participation for media. (Registration information below.) There will be an opportunity for media Q&A via Zoom as part of the program.

**EVENT DETAILS****What:** Speak Out and News Conference: ‘Faces of the Pandemic at UF’**When:** 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3 — virtual**Sponsors:** United Faculty of Florida – University of Florida Chapter (UFF-UF); Graduate Assistants United – University of Florida (GAU-UF); United Faculty of Florida Statewide (UFF); and the Florida Education Association (FEA)**Speakers:** Becky Pringle, NEA president; Nandi Riley, FEA secretary-treasurer; Karen Morian, UFF president; Paul Ortiz, UFF-UF president; undergraduate students Jacob Giner and Rachel Khoury; faculty members Stephen Mulkey and Meera Sitharam; graduate student Bobby Mermer, GAU-UF president; and Gainesville City Commissioner Reina Sacco**To register:** <https://forms.gle/c2eBesar8JpD8vHy9>**Registration contact:** Ashley Nguyen, [membership\\_coordinator@uff-uf.org](mailto:membership_coordinator@uff-uf.org).**UFF-UF and GAU officer contacts:**Paul Ortiz, president, UF Chapter of United Faculty of Florida (UFF-UF),  
[president@uff-uf.org](mailto:president@uff-uf.org).Bobby Mermer, president, UF Chapter of Graduate Assistants United (GAU-UF),  
[president@ufgau.org](mailto:president@ufgau.org).