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Covid-19: stories of those who fought for life – 06/29/2022 – Opinion

?In the recent Brazilian tragedy, deepened by the mistakes of the federal government, it was up to other sectors of the Brazilian State to act tirelessly in defense of life. In addition to the SUS and frontline professionals, municipalities and states, public universities and their reference hospitals played a decisive role in scientific research in real time, in the production of reliable information, in guaranteeing rights and in strengthening networks of solidarity and support. the population.

It was above all Brazilian public universities, with their campuses and university hospitals in more than 500 municipalities and in all regions of the country, that prevented the trail of denialism and destruction in the pandemic from being even greater.

While the government faced scientific evidence, delayed the purchase and application of vaccines, produced fake news and underfunded the SUS, attacking states, municipalities and discrediting health professionals who worked on the front lines in a war scenario, public institutions of higher education made history.

Centro SoU_Ciência, in partnership with Andifes (National Association of Directors of Federal Education Institutions) carried out a research on the subject and launches this Wednesday (29) a panel presenting all fronts of action and initiatives of our federal universities, including what was done in hospitals and clinics, institutes, centers and laboratories for research and technological innovation, in addition to social actions, extension and development of monitoring systems.

From this survey, we were able to map the various relevant and innovative fronts of action of federal universities, involving thousands of professors, technicians and students. They have greatly expanded the technology and capacity of telehealth care, collaborating to reduce the pressure on overcrowded hospitals, supporting the SUS, and developing new systems and software.

They carried out epidemiological mapping, trained personnel, participated in strategic and guidance committees for city halls and state governments. They produced communication and scientific dissemination materials with reliable information, fighting fake news and denialism. They accelerated clinical, therapeutic and pharmaceutical research to guide evidence-based prevention and treatments. They adapted laboratories for the production of hospital supplies, personal protective equipment and respirators. They acted by informing, taking food and welcoming vulnerable populations, especially the elderly, indigenous people, quilombolas and peripheral communities, in all parts of the country.

The mobilization of public universities, students, professors and scientists was and continues to be an impressive reaction to obscurantism, a public and enlightened force in defense of life. In these years, science started to be recognized in Brazil as an active force for the defense of citizenship. No wonder we were one of the main targets of attacks by the forces of backwardness, with systematic budget cuts and victims of ideological warfare with delusional accusations about the university environment.

The panel we have now launched shows what universities really do, even when subjected to attacks and cuts. It allows access to thousands of actions carried out, in a friendly visual interface, and has animations, graphics, illustrations, case studies of good practices and thematic categories of the initiatives of the set of federal universities.

The platform will continue to be fed with new information, cases and analyzes until the end of this year, soon including state universities. It will serve as information for the population, for the defense of public institutions of higher education and as a record for historians of the future — who will be able to distinguish who was on the side of life or on the side of death in this tragic crossroads we live.

Our work in defense of the Brazilian people is a learning experience that will go down in the country's history and, in particular, will mark the life story of our students. In the face of adversity, but with commitment and lucidity, in these years we have formed young citizens and professionals marked by the experience of this national task force in defense of life. They have already made and will make a difference in the reconstruction of the country that lies ahead and will be a beacon so that dark times do not come back to haunt us anytime soon.

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