

Millersville University

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

April
2019

As I walked from Tanger House to my office around noon yesterday, I sensed the excitement and energy that occurs toward the end of the spring semester because of the sudden change in the ambience on campus. Several students were in their hammocks, Miller and S'Ville were gracefully floating in the pond surrounded by cherry blossoms and Bob Marley's songs were emanating from large speakers in front of McNairy Library. Most important, the beauty of our campus seems to be peaking. I am still basking in the warmth of our campus after the gracious welcome you gave me last week during the inauguration festivities. You treated my family, my Ghanaian guests, friends and everyone attending, as if they were your own family. Thank you again.

My first year Listening Tour continues with engaging visits to academic departments and other groups. In addition to my recent visits to Communication and Theatre, Art and Design, and Psychology, I had the opportunity to meet with over 40 retired faculty members at the APSCURF Spring Breakfast meeting. I listened intently to the perspectives of those retired faculty and learned so much from their collective wisdom. They demonstrated their role as the elders in our family.

Also on the topic of listening tours, Chancellor Dan Greenstein will visit our campus for a second round of discussions with our faculty, staff and administrators on Friday as part of his system-wide listening tour. The Chancellor and the Board of Governors are making substantial progress with the System Redesign teams and several members of our campus community are represented on those teams.

Finally, I am excited and looking forward to preside over my first graduate commencement, May 10 in Pucillo and first May undergraduate commencement on Chryst Field, May 11. The opportunity to celebrate the achievement of our students with their families and friends, as well as our entire campus community is very special indeed and I hope to see all of you at the commencement exercises.

INAUGURATION

I am proud to be your president and vow to work with all of you to make Millersville University the best it can be. During the inauguration I spoke of the three Ps; our people, our programs and our place. Together we will increase hands-on learning experiences for our students and engage our alums to be mentors for our current students. Together, we will deepen our commitment to the synergy between the liberal arts and career preparation. I truly believe that Millersville University can provide quality education at an affordable price, prepare our students for the digital age and develop

an inclusive community. As I mentioned in the speech, our collective goal is “Excellence without Elitism.”

You can [read my speech in its entirety](#) and we will soon post a video of the inauguration.

As we head into the final weeks of the spring semester, I ask all of you to join me in working (and playing) together for the betterment of Millersville University. As the Gospel Choir said so eloquently, “There ain’t no party like the Wubah party.” [View Inauguration Highlights](#)

NEGATING HATE DIGITAL QUILT

As a campus community, we understand the value that diversity brings to the educational experience and to the life of our campus. Our goal is to create an environment that is characterized by intellectual diversity, racial/ethnic diversity, cultural diversity, religious and spiritual diversity, and economic diversity. As you have already heard from me --we do not tolerate hate in any form.

Diversity and inclusion are not just words we say, they are actions we take at Millersville University. This is why we added the word “inclusion” to our EPPIIC values last year, and it is at the foundation of our new Digital Quilt called “Negating Hate.” This webpage, which is now accessible from the University homepage, serves as a visual collection of positive, inclusive, supportive statements from members of our University community. All are encouraged to submit their own statement and contribute to the patchwork of positivity that is growing there. The ultimate goal is that this Digital Quilt will continue to grow, and live on in perpetuity, as a symbol of Millersville’s mission and focus on diversity. Please [visit the website](#), read what other members of our community are saying and add your voice to the quilt.

MADE IN MILLERSVILLE

I have always known that our students at Millersville are exceptional. However, I was amazed at the depth and breadth of the work I saw last week at the “Made in Millersville” event. More than 400 of our students displayed their research and work throughout the library.

I spent over an hour visiting posters and listening to presentations. For example, I saw the work of students like Caseem Luck, a government and anthropology major from Willow Grove, who presented, “I Am Not So Rare: The Educational Experiences of Refugee and Immigrant Students.” He decided to participate in Made in Millersville because he believes in, “sharing the narratives of some courageous students whose stories tend to be overlooked.”

Mark Peters II, a music education major from Red Lion, decided to participate to share the uniqueness of Tuva’s music with his presentation, “The Culture and Technique of Tuvan Vocal Music.”

Froylan Omar Fernandez, a chemistry major and mathematics minor from Lancaster, presented, "Physical Organic Study of Ring Strain on Yellow Dye Containing Couplers." I agree with Froylan who said it is important to disseminate your scientific work to the general public to potentially impact the minds of others and excite students to pursue fields in STEM.

And, English major Shaakirah Tate, from Coatesville, was busy at Made in Millersville with three presentations including, "Ebony, the black folks' guide to life," which she shared with me. She decided to take on so much in an effort to overcome her fear of public speaking.

Congratulations to all of our student participants as well as the faculty and staff who supported them. It was a fantastic day.

JOIN US AT MU AFTER WORK

One of my favorite activities since I arrived at Millersville is attending the [MU After Work events](#). I so enjoy meeting our alumni and friends. These events, coordinated by the Alumni Engagement Office and sponsored by the MU Alumni Association and PSECU, provide social networking opportunities to enjoy appetizers, beverages and conversation. A special shout-out to the MUAA Events Committee chair Kathy Focht '70, '75M and to Betty Luke '81 - who rarely miss an After Work event.

I encourage our faculty and staff who are alums to attend. Typically, there is no charge, but guests are encouraged to bring a donation of food for the Campus Cupboard to help address hunger concerns of MU students.

In January there were 80 of us at The Fireside Tavern in Strasburg where we were treated to piano music by current student Tyler Smith, a senior music education major, who by the way, is an outstanding pianist! We had alumni from 1953 through 2017 join us in Strasburg, with all decades represented.

Previous MUAW locations include; Tröegs in Hershey, the Pressroom and Loxley's in Lancaster, Fox & Hound in King of Prussia and Copper Hill in Millersville. You can see photos of the previous events on the [Alumni Association's Facebook page](#). Coming up on June 6, we'll be at [Maggiano's Little Italy in King of Prussia](#). Hope to see you there!

ONLINE ACCESS TO TEXTBOOKS: SAVES MONEY, CREATES SUCCESS IN THE CLASSROOM

The cost of textbooks has been skyrocketing for years, creating a barrier to student success in the classroom. Our Open Educational Resources (OER) working group is focused on eliminating that barrier by encouraging faculty members to participate in the Open Textbook Initiative. This initiative

supports faculty adoption of free, high-quality educational materials published under creative common licenses in lieu of more costly textbooks.

OER textbooks and materials exist across disciplines and are available through websites, the University library or grant-funded OER databases. Many of these materials better meet learner needs by including interactive elements, audio features and other learning support. An example is [The Public Speaking Project](#), started by the late Dr. Lisa Schreiber here at Millersville.

Dr. A. Nicole Pfannenstiel is on the OER working group and says their overall goal is to support students by decreasing costs and to support faculty as they adopt and use the digital materials. This effort will also contribute towards preparing our students for the digital world in which they will live upon graduation. Funds are available for faculty members and they are encouraged to apply to the initiative this semester with a goal of integrating OER materials into classrooms and curriculums for the fall 2019 semester.

We have heard anecdotally of five or more students sharing one textbook to reduce individual costs. We know that limited access to a textbook negatively impacts learning, which impacts student success. Our goal is to improve this situation, to aid faculty in supplying students with access to meaningful learning materials on the first day of class. Some faculty are already using OER materials and the group estimates that they have saved students over \$200,000 in the past two years!

HOTDOGS, BASEBALL AND THE FOOD TRUCK

Spring is here and that means Marauder baseball and the food truck have returned to Cooper Park! Our Marauders are once again ranked in the nation's top 25 and were the preseason favorites to win the PSAC East.

Already, we have seen Eli Nabholz and Cordell Shannon win the PSAC East Pitcher of the Week award and Ben Snyder, Cole Friese and Jimmy Cain win the hitter of the week award. One of the team's most exciting players to watch is relief pitcher Tyler Yankosky. I recommend [this story](#) that explains how Tyler took on a new role for the good of the team.

Earlier this month we named the home team dugout in honor of former Marauder All-American and hall of famer Mike VanGavree '90 and recognized a new endowed scholarship. Mike was one of the all-time great Marauders and has become a successful entrepreneur and business owner. The scholarship was made possible by Mike's mother-in-law and friend of the University, Phyllis Mowery. I am thankful to the family of the late Senator Hal Mowery for their commitment to our student-athletes.

The Marauders take on East Stroudsburg on Friday and I am excited to see that game against our PSAC rival. You can see the entire [athletic schedule here](#).

There is nothing quite like sitting in the sun, having a hotdog from the food truck and cheering on the Marauders. I hope to see you at The Coop this spring!