

Millersville University

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

July
2025

Happy July, everyone! Although campus is normally quiet and laid back at this time, the reality this year is quite different. Despite the searing summer heat and almost daily afternoon rain events, our campus is buzzing with excitement from summer camps and conferences. Not even these weather challenges are standing in the way of learning and having fun for the hundreds of new faces, both young and old, that are enjoying our campus grounds this month.

As we prepare for the upcoming academic year, we are celebrating the progress we've made over the last five years and the urgency of continuing to move the University forward. Our Council of Trustees endorsed the 2025-30 strategic plan at their June meeting. I am thankful to our Strategic Advisory Council, led by co-chairs, Drs. Marc Tomljanovich and Laura Granruth, who helped craft the superb draft that was presented to the trustees. I am eager to celebrate the many accomplishments of our faculty and staff and to unveil the new plan at the upcoming State of the 'Ville address. I hope you will join us on Friday, September 5, for my annual address and the ever-popular Garden Supper.

While the June 30 deadline to pass Pennsylvania's state budget has passed, negotiations within the legislature and with the Governor's team are ongoing. Together with the Chancellor's Office, I continue to watch the situation closely and remain in contact with key officials in Harrisburg. Millersville is fortunate to have strong and dedicated advocates in key roles in the State House. I remain hopeful that the budget deliberations will resolve soon and allow us to continue to support a high-quality and affordable educational experience for our students and their families.

During the July 17, 2025, meeting of the PASSHE Board of Governors (BOG), our new Chancellor, Dr. Chris Fiorentino, was officially installed, and the tuition rate for the upcoming 2025-26 academic year was set. After seven consecutive years of a tuition freeze, the BOG approved a \$139 per semester tuition increase for in-state undergraduates, which brings the rate per semester to \$3,997. PASSHE campuses remain the most affordable option in Pennsylvania. As you are likely aware, PASSHE requested a 6.5 percent increase in state funding this year to maintain flat tuition. If sufficient funding is received during the final budget negotiations, the BOG would roll back part or all of the increase.

As we dive into the heart of summer, I am thrilled to share some truly outstanding achievements and exciting developments from across our university community in this month's newsletter, which is evidence of the remarkable talent, dedication and collaborative spirit that define Millersville University. From groundbreaking academic recognition to impactful community partnerships and individual triumphs, there's so much to celebrate.

Leading the way in this issue is the incredible news about Professor Emerita Dr. Ximena Catepillán, who has received the prestigious Yueh-Gin Gung and Dr. Charles Y. Hu Distinguished Service Award from the Mathematical Association of America. This highest honor in mathematics education is a well-deserved recognition of Dr. Catepillán's enduring commitment to fostering inclusive and meaningful mathematical

experiences. Her work has profoundly shaped the field, and we are immensely proud to see her lifelong dedication celebrated on a national scale.

Innovation and collaboration are also at the forefront this month, as Millersville University, in partnership with Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology and two local businesses, secured a significant grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). This funding will advance manufacturing innovation through a student research project, underscoring our commitment to experiential learning and regional economic growth. We also applaud Precision Robotics for receiving The Thomas T. Baldrige Catalyst Award, highlighting their vital role in workforce development and their impactful Robotic WorX program with our students.

Finally, we celebrate the diverse accomplishments of our students and alumni, from Kayla Mitchell's return to "MasterChef Duos," showcasing the incredible talent nurtured within our Communications program, to the memorable graduation of the Class of 2025, who were the first to enjoy a refreshingly cool commencement in the newly renovated Pucillo Gymnasium. And let's not forget the historic season for our baseball team, who, thanks to the support of Senator Scott Martin '02, played and won under the new lights at Cooper Park for the first time in program history. These stories, and more, truly capture the vibrant spirit and ongoing success of our Millersville family.

My warmest wishes to you as you enjoy the remainder of the summer with family and friends.

PROFESSOR EMERITA RECEIVES AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO MATHEMATICS

Professor Emerita of Mathematics Dr. Ximena Catepillán was named as the 2025 recipient of the most prestigious award for distinguished service to the field of mathematics.

The Mathematical Association of America, the world's largest community of mathematicians, students and enthusiasts, presented Catepillán with the Yueh-Gin Gung and Dr. Charles Y. Hu Distinguished Service Award, which honors individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to mathematics and significantly and positively influenced the field of mathematical education on a national scale.

Catepillán taught mathematics in Chile at the Universidad de los Lagos, the Universidad de Magallanes and the Universidad de Santiago, where she earned a Master of Arts in mathematics. She came to the United States and earned a master's and doctorate in mathematics from the University of Iowa before joining the Millersville faculty in 1991. Catepillán retired in 2020.

"This prestigious award recognizes Catepillán's enduring commitment to fostering inclusive, culturally informed, and meaningful mathematical experiences for students, educators, and communities," according to the MAA website. "Her work continues to shape the mathematical landscape and serves as an inspiration to others across the field."

[Additional information is available here.](#)



MU, THADDEUS STEVENS COLLEGE, COUNTY BUSINESSES PARTNER ON GRANT

Millersville University, Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology, Precision Cobotics and PrecisionForm of Lititz were awarded a \$69,999 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to advance manufacturing innovation.

The funding will support a student research project the two schools will undertake with PrecisionForm and Precision Cobotics. The project is one of 42 funded as part of the Manufacturing PA's fellowship program, which embeds the Commonwealth's best and brightest students with local manufacturers to develop new technologies and advance innovation statewide.



[Read more about the grant and funded project here.](#)

Precision Cobotics was also recognized with The Thomas T. Baldrige Catalyst Award from the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce. The award honors a visionary individual, business, or community member in Lancaster County who actively enhances the region's economic vitality, quality of place, and overall community well-being.

"What sets Precision Cobotics apart is its deep commitment to workforce development," according to the Chamber website. "The company recognizes that the future of automation is rooted as much in people as in technology. In 2024 alone, through its Robotic WorX program with Millersville University, Precision Cobotics engaged over 1,450 students, educators, and community members through internships, lab tours, presentations, and immersive learning experiences. Nearly half of participants identified as underrepresented in STEM, underscoring the company's focus on access and equity."

MU GRAD ON MASTERCHEF AGAIN

JUNE 10 UPDATE: Kayla Mitchell '25 reaches top 12 teams

Kayla Mitchell just graduated with a degree in communications and a concentration in public relations, but she's already had two big PR wins in her life. First, she was a contestant on "MasterChef Junior" season three as an 11-year-old, and now, she's back for another try on this season of "MasterChef Duos."

Mitchell and Ryan Kate Brandenburg, a fellow contest from her season on "MasterChef Junior," reunited in the kitchen and earned their spot on episode two with a dish of pan-seared sea bass served over a bed of lemon garlic spinach with sautéed cherry tomatoes, a white wine beurre blanc and toasted breadcrumbs. The show is airing now, and you can watch it live on FOX and the next day on Hulu.

[Read the full story here.](#)



A COOL SEND-OFF FOR THE CLASS OF 2025

On May 10, the 1,110 members of the Class of 2025 crossed the stage to receive their diplomas following remarks by President Daniel Wubah and three alumni speakers. Dr. Melvin Allen '69 addressed the ceremony for the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences as well as the Lombardo College of Business; Dr. Kemah Washington '03 spoke at the ceremony for the College of Education and Human Services; and Deborah Willwerth '88 spoke to students at the ceremony for the College of Science and Technology.

Pucillo Gymnasium, which was constructed in 1970, was the site for the three ceremonies. With support from a \$2 million grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Pucillo has been renovated to house a new HVAC system that provides air conditioning. Until now, the Gym only had fresh air ventilation and heat. Recent graduates and their families were the first to enjoy a cool, climate-controlled commencement.



MEMORIES MADE AT ANNUAL EMPLOYEE BBQ

Faculty and staff celebrated the end of a successful academic year with the annual All-Employee BBQ. The event included activities like bingo and a cornhole tournament.

You can see photos from the event on the [Office of Human Resources SharePoint site](#)(Requires login).



UNDER THE LIGHTS AT COOPER PARK

Millersville's baseball team had a banner season that included a PSAC East title, 44 wins, and a record 29 home victories at Cooper Park. Some of those wins came, for the first time in the program's 136-year history, under the lights.

Financial support from a grant initiated by Sen. Scott Martin '02 from Lancaster County helped equip Cooper Park with lights in June 2024. The first official home night game for the Marauders was on March 14, 2025. Head Coach Jon Shehan, who waited 15 years to coach a game under the lights at Cooper Park, was quoted by the local paper on that memorable night.



"It's definitely special," he said. "We've had this vision for a long time. I want to thank Scott Martin and our administrators for making it happen. We had a great crowd tonight for a March baseball game. That's what it's all about, and it's only going to get better from here."

Cooper Park saw another first during the 2025 season. For the first time, it was the site of the PSAC Tournament, which Millersville won with four wins in four days.