

Millersville University

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

February
2019

The first few weeks of this new year have gone by like a blur because I have been traveling to meetings or visiting alums and donors. I was in Arizona, Florida, Massachusetts and Texas last month. During these trips, I had a chance to meet our alums and friends, who were always excited to share their stories about our University. However, I am always glad to be back on campus. In this issue I share information about some of my trips, the outstanding fundraising effort that occurred last week and several exciting events and speakers. We are also building excitement surrounding the upcoming "Made in Millersville" event and my Inauguration in April. Last but not least, in case you were not able to participate in last week's One Day Give event, it is not too late to donate to the [Imagine the Possible campaign](#), because all proceeds will be used to support our students.



ALUMNI AND SUPPORTER OUTREACH

During my State of the University Address last fall I pledged that I will work tirelessly toward raising funds to ensure our students' success so when you don't see me on campus I will be visiting our alumni and friends and sharing our vision of making the exceptional Millersville education experience available to more students in the Commonwealth and beyond.

This winter, I have been doing exactly that. Here are a few highlights of my recent travels:

- **American Meteorological Society's 99th Annual Meeting** -- It was nice to meet so many Millersville meteorology students and alumni at the AMS meeting in Phoenix, Arizona last month. More than 40 students learned more about their field from peers and industry experts. Additionally, the University's annual AMS mixer was packed with friends, supporters and corporate partners such as AccuWeather, WeatherTrends and Harris Corporation.
- **2019 NCAA Convention** -- As you may know, Marauder Athletics is one of three priority areas for the University's Imagine the Possible fundraising campaign. To learn more about how to directly support our 450 student-athletes in succeeding on the field and in the classroom, I attended the 2019 NCAA Annual Convention in Orlando. While in the area, I also connected with alumni in Central Florida to provide them with examples of our students' current

achievements.

- **Listening Tour in Houston, Texas** -- I had the pleasure of meeting many alumni in Houston during my recent Listening Tour event in Texas – but one couple stood out, Mr. Glenn Julius '63 and Mrs. E. Louise Julius '64 of Arlington. They have such strong feelings for Millersville and were so happy that I was in the area that they drove five hours to Houston! The Julius' shared many stories about their time at MU – including how they met. I am energized by hearing stories like theirs and sharing examples of student successes today!

WE GAVE TO WHAT WE LOVE

Once again, thank you for your generosity to Millersville University last week. I hope that you gave to what you loved during the One Day Give campaign on Valentine's Day. Alumni, faculty, staff and friends were invited to join the One Day Give by making a gift at any level to the area of Millersville University that they love. This was the sixth year for the online giving campaign aimed at providing support to our students as they journey toward achieving success.

Without your help, many students would not have access to scholarships, student learning experiences and athletic opportunities. Throughout the day, there were many opportunities to participate in exciting giving challenges and drawings, and become involved in activities, contests and celebrate this special day of giving. We were able to raise \$130,093 from 490 donors during the 14-hour campaign. The gifts received will be distributed to more than 35 different funds at Millersville, including the [Scholarship Fund](#). The Scholarship Fund helps to support various Millersville students and programs.

MAKING THEATRE HAPPEN AT MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY

Ever wonder how the plays that are performed at Millersville University are chosen? Well, I did, so I asked our associate professor of Communication & Theatre, Tony Elliot.

Here is what he told me, "We begin well over a year in advance with conversations about what kinds of shows we have not done in a while. Our goal is to offer students a very wide range of experiences during their time at MU, so we track the plays in order to offer the most variety. We also take into consideration the student talent and the challenges of each production. The fall play has been done in Clair performance hall for the past few seasons. The plays chosen for that space are very different than a play for the Rafters Theatre. Every other year we have done a musical in the fall, so that is a factor as well."

Professor Elliot says he reads a lot of plays to get ideas and then tosses around titles before making the selections by April 1, the year before. While summer may seem like a quiet time on campus, Professor Elliot says that is a big time for planning and design discussions for the performances.

The first play of the spring semester is "The Miss Firecracker Contest," which opens tonight. The comedy, by Beth Henley, is directed by guest director Terri Mastrobuono. "The Miss Firecracker Contest," will take place Feb. 22, 23, 28 and March 1 and 2 at 8 p.m., and Feb. 24 and March 3 at 2 p.m. in Rafters Theatre. [Tickets are available online.](#)

See you at the theatre!

CONRAD NELSON LECTURE FEATURING AMY SHERALD

February is Black History Month and we are fortunate to have several events on our campus to celebrate. Some campuses have an event or pick a day to celebrate, while others have a series of events. One of the exciting events on campus this month in celebration of Black History month was a presentation by Ms. Amy Sherald.

Ms. Sherald was the featured artist at the annual Conrad Nelson Lecture at Millersville earlier this week and she spoke to a packed house in the Winter Center. You may recognize her name as the artist who painted the official portrait of former First Lady Michelle Obama, commissioned for the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.

The portrait of Michelle Obama, unveiled last February, has been met with rave reviews, including my deep appreciation for the breadth and depth of Ms. Sherald's work. The Baltimore-based artist is best known for her stylized, figurative paintings of vibrantly dressed individuals rendered in grayscale skin tones against flat, highly-saturated backgrounds that evoke a sense of timeless identity. You can see examples of her work at: <http://www.amysherard.com/>.

CAMPUS PREPARING FOR MIDDLE STATES VISIT

Since July 2017, a Self-Study towards reaccreditation by the Middle State Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) has been underway on our campus. Conducted by the Middle States Steering Committee and working group members, this assessment is crucial for our continued accreditation from the commission.

I encourage you to familiarize yourself with the process. There is a plethora of information on the [Middle States website](#). You can also talk to members of the coordinating team; Dr. James Delle, associate provost & team co-chair; Dr. Laurie Hanich, professor in Educational Foundations & team co-chair; and Dr. Lisa Shibley, assistant vice-president of Institutional Assessment and planning & team coordinator. Or, talk to members of the working groups.

Currently, working group members are researching lines of inquiry and finalizing evidence summary statements. The lines of inquiry explore questions that will help to advance our strategic plan while the evidence summary statements examine our compliance with each of the seven standards for accreditation defined by MSCHE. Chairs and work groups have been assigned to analyze each of the standards; members of those groups may reach out to you for assistance in finding and collecting the appropriate information.

The Self-Study process has been actively ongoing for the past year and is slated to continue until January 2020.

SAFETY MATTERS AT THE 'VILLE

Finally, let me share two safety-related issues on our campus with you. First, the safety of our students is at the forefront of decisions we make at Millersville University, whether for snow delays/closures, road closures or lane closures. Recently with snow, ice, sleet and rain throughout Central Pennsylvania, we've had to make difficult decisions with regards to opening late, closing early or closing for the entire day. Our leadership team consults with the grounds crew regarding sidewalks, parking lots and roads, as well as with our meteorology team so that we can make the best possible decisions based on information at hand. We also take into account what the local school districts have decided.

Since a large percentage of our students reside in our residence halls or live close to campus, we make every effort to keep the campus open. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs has emphasized to faculty that commuting students who are unable to make it to class due to inclement weather and severe driving conditions should not be penalized. In all cases of inclement weather faculty, staff and students should exercise due caution and make the final determination as to whether they feel it is safe to commute.

Second, to make our streets safer on campus, we worked collaboratively with PennDOT and the Millersville Borough to close the left turn lane at the intersection of West Frederick Street and Shenks Lane. Motorists are still able to turn left from Frederick onto Shenks from the remaining through lane. We had a couple of accidents last semester and other near misses that prompted the move. By closing the left turn lane, the blind spot is eliminated.

To further enhance safety at that intersection, a temporary light to improve illumination was installed and will remain in place during the spring semester.

In addition, a traffic study is underway to assess conditions at this and other intersections on campus for potential modifications to improve vehicle and pedestrian traffic. One of the things the study is reviewing is the temporary closure of a portion of East Frederick Street. We want to explore the possibility of converting that section into a pedestrian walkway.

Please let me know other ideas you have for safety on campus by sending me an email. Students can bring their ideas to the Student Government Association, which meets every Thursday evening.