

Millersville University

# PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Feb.  
2021

Dear Campus Community,

Last Saturday afternoon as I was reviewing a report in the sunroom at Tanger House, I received a phone call from Ghana. When I heard a loud whoosh sound in the background, I suspected it was the noise made by an air conditioner that has just been turned on at the caller's end and I was right. At that moment, I looked at the deep snow behind Tanger House and felt an appreciation for the winter season. At times, it is a helpful reminder that some of those in the tropics are envious of the beauty and variability provided by the four seasons.

The serene beauty of the fresh snow covering the old snow created a glistening landscape that we have come to accept as the norm on our campus. Looking towards the pond, the sidewalks were clean thanks to our Facilities staff who had been working for hours, even over the weekend. I would like to thank them and everyone involved in helping our university meet its mission by adapting to our current unique challenges and circumstances.

February provides opportunities to get involved in various activities and events in our community. I hope that you've had an opportunity to participate in an event or two to celebrate Black Heritage Month. One of the highlights of our campus celebrations is the [Carter G. Woodson lecture](#) which will be delivered by Dr. Deborah Gray White on February 25<sup>th</sup>. On that same day, we hold our annual [One Day Give](#), where everyone will be invited to the Give to What You Love campaign. Lastly, I encourage you to participate in the search process for the next Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs by joining the [Campus Open Forums](#).

This month's newsletter includes stories about new plans to renovate and repurpose Brooks Hall. We also learn about a new Bachelor of Science in Emergency Management program and plans for a new Financial Literacy program. We celebrate the success of Pennsylvania's Psychologist of the Year, Trustee Amber Sessoms and Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program fellowship awardee, Dr. Wanja Ogongi. We also learn about how Health Services has once again moved mountains to support our health and safety by providing campus surveillance testing for COVID-19.

On a related note, last week we experienced the highest number of positive COVID-19 case numbers on campus to date. Our performance last fall demonstrated that we have the ability to keep case numbers low if we practice good behaviors. In the days ahead, I encourage everyone to wear face coverings, maintain social distancing and complete the LiveSafe App. Thank you for all that you do to keep our community safe.

Be kind, be safe and stay healthy.

## **BROOKS HALL TO BECOME HOME FOR LOMBARDO COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**

As we implement the University's new strategic plan – Tradition and Transformation – there is no better project that fits this plan and is in direct alignment with the Campus Facilities Master Plan than renovating Brooks Hall. The renovated building will serve as the home for the Lombardo College of Business.

Brooks Hall was constructed in 1938 and served as the main athletics venue. Even after the construction of Pucillo Gymnasium in 1971, it continued to support athletic teams and intramural programs. Brooks was officially closed in 2017 and was identified for demolition.

As the home for the Lombardo College of Business, Brooks Hall will be a collaborative, inclusive campus space that brings together business, entrepreneurship and innovation. Brooks will host alumni, professional and community events and act as a hub to engage faculty, students, local companies, startups, nonprofits and government agencies. The facility will center both traditional business programs and interdisciplinary offerings involving data analytics, and offer flexible workspaces designed to foster creative transformation.

The renovations will maintain the tradition and legacy of the building while incorporating the latest technology to make this a smart building. Smart building technology includes energy efficient aspects for minimal user input to control air quality, security, lighting and other systems and is flexible enough to accommodate different uses of the building.

## **PENNSYLVANIA PSYCHOLOGIST OF THE YEAR**

One of our very own, alumna and current Council of Trustees member, Dr. Amber Sessoms, was recently named the Pennsylvania School Psychologist of the Year. Dr. Sessoms is a two-time graduate of Millersville University earning a bachelor's degree in psychology in 2006 and

a master's degree in school psychology in 2008. She also holds a Doctor of Education in lifelong learning and adult education from Penn State University.

The award is well-deserved. And while the accolade alone is worth celebration, Dr. Sessoms is exceptional in almost every sense of the word: she's also the [first person of color to win this award](#) in all of Pennsylvania. This year, the Association of School Psychologists of Pennsylvania selected two psychologists who "exemplify the role of a school psychologist and demonstrate outstanding commitment to the field."

In addition to her role as a member of MU's Council of Trustees, Dr. Sessoms is the school psychologist at Central Dauphin High School in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and has nearly two decades of experience in the field. Our congratulations to Dr. Amber Sessoms! We're so glad to call you a part of the family at MU.

## RANDOM COVID TESTING

Throughout the spring semester Health Services is conducting random testing of all students living on campus, living in affiliated housing, working on campus, attending in-person classes, part of ROTC and/or in field placements. Employees working on campus are also included in the voluntary random testing. While the testing is voluntary, I encourage everyone selected to follow through with the test. We need you to keep our campus safe. And, everyone tested will receive a free t-shirt, designed by one of our students.

Here is additional information on the testing.

**What happens if a student/employee tests positive for COVID-19 through the asymptomatic testing?** If someone tests positive on the rapid antigen test they will be contacted by Health Services. Health Services will complete a confirmatory rapid PCR test to ensure the accuracy of the screening test.

**What support does a student get if they are in isolation or quarantine based on their test result?**

Any student living on campus who tests positive for COVID-19 will be isolated in residence hall space dedicated for this purpose. HARP employees and Health Services will check-in with the student to ensure health, counseling, nutritional and academic needs are met.

**What is the difference between asymptomatic and symptomatic testing?** Asymptomatic testing is when a person does not have symptoms.

Symptomatic testing is when a person does have symptoms.

### **Who is conducting the asymptomatic testing?**

Health Services conducts the tests in Luek Hall on campus, 24 Byerly Drive.

### **What type of asymptomatic test is being used?**

These are antigen COVID tests from The Pennsylvania Department of Health. The test is a nasal swab test that can be administered and analyzed on site, with rapid results.

### **Do I have to make an appointment in order to get an asymptomatic test? Would I be able to reschedule my test?**

Yes, you need an appointment and should follow the instructions in your email.

### **May I call to schedule a test, even if I don't receive an email?**

At this time, students/employees cannot call and schedule for asymptomatic testing. Any student who is having symptoms or had significant exposure can still call Health Services and be tested. Employees should contact their care provider

### **What do I need to bring with me when I am getting tested?**

ID

Smart phone with NAVICA app already downloaded and account registered

Mask

### **How long will my COVID-19 asymptomatic testing appointment take?**

The actual test is less than two minutes. You do need to allow time to get checked-in.

### **If I received a test outside the University and tested positive, what should I do?**

Students should contact Health Services at [hservices@millersville.edu](mailto:hservices@millersville.edu) or 717-871-5250.

Employees should contact Human Resources at [Human.Resources@millersville.edu](mailto:Human.Resources@millersville.edu) or 717-871-4950.

### **Who do I contact if I have a question about asymptomatic testing?**

Health Services at [hservices@millersville.edu](mailto:hservices@millersville.edu) or 717-871-5250.

### **How will I learn about my test results?**

You will be required to install the NAVICA App on your phone for rapid receipt of your test results. You will receive a NAVICA app notification approximately 20 minutes after your test.

## NEW BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Millersville's Master of Science in Emergency Management degree program has been at the forefront in education and training in this field since its inception in 2007 - winning awards for building a workforce of leaders in preparedness and disaster management. Now, starting in fall 2021, the University will launch a new Bachelor of Science in Emergency Management degree program to reach a broader audience at the post-secondary level.

The field of emergency management has shown significant growth and continues to further develop as disasters and hazards are affecting more people and are more costly. Response to and recovering from these events requires a higher level of collaboration, coordination and technological sophistication than ever before. COVID-19 is just one such emergency that has led to an increased interest and demand for expertise in the field.

The new multidisciplinary degree curriculum is based on an all-hazards approach that includes the scientific underpinnings of emergency management while steeped in practical and applied experiences. Students will be able to use effective methods for decision making, exhibit competency in assessing risk susceptibility, resilience and vulnerability within a community or organizations.

Graduates from our bachelor's and master's emergency management programs will be prepared for careers in both the public and private sectors including various governmental agencies such as emergency management, public health, transportation, and public works, non-profit disaster relief organizations, domestic and international nongovernmental organizations, energy sector, private sector emergency management consulting, information technology and more.

Millersville's online master's in emergency management program has been ranked among the top in the nation over the past year by:

- [BestMastersPrograms.org](https://www.bestmastersprograms.org)
- [securitydegreehub.com](https://www.securitydegreehub.com)
- [Best Colleges Online List Rankings](https://www.bestcollegesonline.com)
- [Intelligent.com](https://www.intelligent.com)

## MILLERSVILLE INTRODUCES NEW FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM

During this pandemic, the financial health of many of our students and their families have taken a hit. We at Millersville University (MU) are doing all we can to try and lessen that burden. From putting a freeze on tuition and room and board fees to offering students help through the Cares Relief and EPPIIC Student Compassion Funds, we've done our best to live out our EPIIC value of compassion.

But we want to do more. So, we have started to build the foundation for a [Financial Literacy Program](#) as part of the new University Strategy Plan.

Since the fall, Dr. Marc Tomljanovich, Dean of the Lombardo College of Business, and a group of University staff, administrators, financial experts and faculty have been meeting to build a multi-layered program to do just that. Understanding how to balance one's monthly budget, how interest rates affect loan repayments, how to avoid investing scams and the importance of saving early for retirement are all crucial skills our students need.

The potential for MU to create a distinctive financial literacy program that truly helps our students not just now, but for their whole lives, is tremendous. Very few universities have designed an integrated financial education program. We want all our students to have a rich number of opportunities, from the moment they step on campus through graduation.

## PROF RECEIVES FELLOWSHIP

Dr. Wanja Ogongi, assistant professor in the School of Social Work at Millersville University, has been awarded a fellowship by the Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program. Dr. Ogongi will travel to Kenya to work with Chuka University and professor Christopher Kiboro on their project titled "Curriculum Co-Development for a New Baccalaureate, Master's and Ph.D. in Social Work."

For Ogongi, her personal goal for participating in the fellowship program is the opportunity it provides to create a one-of-a-kind social work program that is culturally appropriate and responsive and to use her social work expertise to give back to a country that has given her so much. Dr. Ogongi hopes to cultivate relationships and establish networks for future research and teaching collaborations that will span over many years to come.

She hopes to travel to Kenya this coming summer to complete the fellowship program. Carnegie is monitoring the unfolding pandemic and is remaining flexible with their original

plans, potentially offering a virtual option with travel built into the program later in the year if conditions do not allow travel this summer.

Dr. Ogongi is just one of our professors doing incredible work here and around the world and bringing those experiences back to our students.