

Millersville University

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

May/June
2021

Dear Millersville University Community,

It appears the transition from spring to summer is as uncertain as can be because of the unseasonably warm weather a couple of weeks ago and this weekend's cool weather. Also, the lower number of students and employees on campus throughout the year has made the shift to summer less dramatic than in previous years. As such, I am already looking forward with glee to the full campus experience that awaits us this fall.

But before we set our minds on fall preparation, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to all faculty, staff and students who helped to keep our community safe since the pandemic started. In particular, I would like to thank the Incident Management Team (IMT), led by Drs. Victor DeSantis and Duane Hagelgans. I would also like to extend a special thanks to our Health Services team, led by Dr. Tim Weaver and Joanne Ocasio. These individuals and many others worked each day to provide for our community's health and safety, and I know we are all very grateful.

I hope you were able to join one of the two open forums jointly hosted by the IMT and Fall Planning Task Force recently. These open discussions provided a valuable opportunity to discuss our current approach to managing COVID-19 and our plans for the fall, which will continue to be updated on the [COVID website](#). A reminder that vaccination remains our best pathway to a full return to a vibrant campus life.

This month's newsletter includes information about vaccination and our fall plans from the Fall Planning Task Force chair, Dr. Rachel Finley-Bowman. It also covers reflections and plans of one of our recent graduates and former student Trustee, Adam Bachman, on his post-graduation plans. The University's acquisition of on-campus residential housing from our affiliate is also discussed. An update on the Strategic Plan and feedback from Dr. Karen Rice on her recent participation on a global sustainability panel is also highlighted in this issue. Lastly, we'll celebrate the 75th anniversary of men's wrestling.

Recently, the School District of Lancaster honored two of our former faculty members by officially naming the former Southeast (Hand) Middle School and Buchanan Elementary

School after Hazel I. Jackson and Rita Smith-Wade-El, respectively. We are immensely proud of the lasting impact these MU ambassadors have made on our community.

In light of the social injustice we have seen over the past year, acts of anti-Semitism we have seen in recent days and broader conflicts we see internationally, let ours be voices that call for peace, understanding and a more just world and society. Enjoy the summer and I look forward to our gradual return to normalcy on our campus.

Be well,

Daniel A. Wubah
University President

HONORING OUR GRADUATES

Biemesderfer Stadium on the Millersville University campus was the place to be on May 6, 7 and 8 when we were able to honor our graduates from 2020 and 2021. More than 1,100 students took part in the four graduation ceremonies.

We started on Thursday, May 6, with a beautiful day for our 2020 graduates, who waited a year to don their caps and gowns, and continued with our graduate ceremony Friday night. The ceremonies concluded with two 2021 undergraduate ceremonies on Saturday.

Each graduate has their own precious story, but I'd like to share a bit about Adam Bachman, who served as the student representative on the Council of Trustees and will be working for the Department of Homeland Security. Adam graduated with a bachelor's in government and political affairs and minors in economics, German culture studies and psychology.

What is your favorite memory of Millersville?

My favorite memories include attending orientation as a freshman, specifically the pinning and candle lighting ceremonies. Both events really made me feel like I was a part of the Millersville community and they were a great introduction to the start of my college career.

Another favorite memory has been exploring Millersville's campus and meeting new people. I am very fortunate to have been able to develop great friendships throughout my time here at MU and make so many awesome memories.

What was the most impactful part of your experience at MU?

The leadership opportunities that I have been afforded at Millersville have been the most

impactful part of my experience. These positions include being a former club president of the Alliance for Social Change, a resident assistant and a student trustee. I have been the student trustee for Millersville University's council of trustees for the past two years and am super fortunate to have been able to hold this position. It has allowed me to meet compassionate and dedicated MU faculty and staff, trustees, fellow students, legislators and other community leaders.

Each of these opportunities have taken me out of my comfort zone and, although there were some growing pains, these positions have been very transformational in terms of further developing me as an active member in my community and as a young professional.

Any advice for incoming students?

My advice to incoming students would be to get involved on campus and be intentional with your time. College is an incredible but brief opportunity where you have so much room to learn and develop, not only academically, but personally and professionally as well. You will be surprised at how many life-changing and diverse opportunities are out there if you work hard and get outside of your comfort zone. Take some time to figure out your purpose, pursue your passions, embrace who you are, and be sure to make good memories and develop genuine connections along the way.

What are your plans for after graduation?

I will be working for the Department of Homeland Security's Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) as an analyst. Before my current Federal Internship with DHS-CISA, I also interned at the Pennsylvania Governor's Office of Homeland Security which was an internship opportunity I discovered through the [ELCM](#) here at Millersville. I am super excited to start my full-time position with CISA and work with other highly motivated individuals who have a passion for public service, national security and policy.

Q/A WITH FALL PLANNING TASK FORCE CHAIR

The Fall Planning Task Force is made up of 15 people from the campus community. Dr. Rachel Finley-Bowman is the chair of the committee. They meet twice a week and in addition, Dr. Finley-Bowman meets with the Incident Management Team every Wednesday.

Q. What's the primary goal of the task force?

The Fall Planning Task Force serves as a liaison to connect units with the necessary information, communicate that information to the campus and wider community, and promote the four overarching principles of the conceptual framework – BE SAFE, BE EMPOWERED, BE INNOVATIVE, BE EPPIIC. The task force aims to support units in their efforts

to operate within existing general published guidelines for safety and mitigation of risk. Units should use this guidance to determine their own plans/approaches for a successful return to face-to-face work, classroom instruction, campus events, and residential campus life, including contingencies should they be necessary.

Q. How do you interact with IMT?

The task force will work in concert with IMT through summer 2021 to ensure a strong transition from remote work to a full campus reopening.

Q. Anything else you'd like to add?

The task force encourages every member of the MU community to do all that they can to ensure a successful 2021-2022 – get vaccinated, follow covid safety and mitigation guidelines, mask up, stay informed and encourage others to communicate and stay informed, follow cyber safety guidelines, and always BE EPPIIC!

MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY REVIEWS & STRENGTHENS STRATEGIC PLAN

Millersville's strategic plan, "Tradition and Transformation," is continually reviewed and strengthened by our Strategic Advisory Council. Earlier this spring, the council met to reset priorities for the upcoming year and adjust the plan in response to the COVID pandemic. The five-year plan includes goals to keep the University on track to increase enrollment, decrease the cost of attendance and more. While the plan's scope has not changed, we are continuously looking for ways to improve the course we have charted for Millersville.

Creating the plan involved hard work by many individuals from across the University. It was developed by an All-University Council consisting of over 80 individuals who worked for the academic year of 2019 and 2020. The group updated the mission and vision statements to support the University's EPPIIC values and crafted four strategic directions.

The plan includes a focus on integrated planning and a new focus on investing in people and places and ensuring that we have the human talent, technology resources and state-of-the-art facilities to deliver the best possible experience to our students. Many thanks to those who have worked so diligently to ensure the success of Millersville University for our current and future students – we couldn't do it without you.

MILLERSVILLE ACQUIRES AFFILIATE HOUSING

The Board of Governors (BOG), responsible for planning and coordinating Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education's development and operation, approved the acquisition of affiliate housing by Millersville University for an estimated \$146 million during its April 15 meeting.

The acquisition will result in a savings of approximately \$50 million over 27 years because the bonds' interest rate will drop from 4.95% to 2.8%. Millersville's Council of Trustees (COT) already approved this acquisition during their March meeting.

The approval to acquire [The Villages](#); South, East and West represents a trend in higher education for colleges and universities. And, saving almost \$2 million a year makes sense during these challenging fiscal times.

Student Services, Inc. (SSI) currently owns the bonds on the Villages. SSI and [Student Lodging, Inc.](#) will continue to operate Brookwood Court and the Healthy Living apartments.

The University appreciates the great relationship we've had with our colleagues at SSI and we look forward to working together for many more years.

The transaction is expected to take place by the summer of 2021.

75 YEARS OF WRESTLING GREATNESS

2021 marks the 75th anniversary of wrestling which finds its origins in 1946 when Dr. Theodore H. Rupp founded the Millersville wrestling program. At that time, Dr. Daniel L. Biemesderfer was president of Millersville State Normal School.

Dr. Rupp got the program off to a great start and posted a 71-18-2 record in 11 seasons and guided the Marauders to State Teacher's College Championships in 1949 and 1951.

Since then, Millersville has had seven National Champions and a host of national qualifiers and outstanding student-athletes.

"When I started wrestling for Millersville in 1961, we were in Brooks Hall on horsehair mats," says Phil Loht. "It was a tiny little room, but we had good coaching – Jim Maurer, good people. Wrestling has done so much for me personally – it helped me build confidence."

Today the wrestling team is led by Kerry Regner. Since his hiring in 2017 Coach Regner has infused energy into the program, producing Millersville's first national champion in 39 years, three All-Americans, and led the team to its most dual wins in a decade.

A committee of 18 wrestlers from the 1950s to today is working on a celebration for Homecoming weekend in October. Events are being planned for Friday and Saturday, including participation in the alumni golf outing and riding in the parade.

National Champs:

Dr. Walter E. Kottmeyer

In 1962, Dr. Kottmeyer captured the 157-pound title at the NAIA Championships and received All-America status.

Ernest Eric Gyll

The first Marauder to win a NCAA Championship, Ernest Eric Gyll won the 190-pound national championship in 1976.

Henry Callie

In an era when Millersville wrestling stood among the elite programs and routinely finished near the top Henry Callie was a standout and can make the statement that in 1978, he was the best 118-pound wrestler in Division III.

Andy Zook

Considered among the finest wrestlers in Marauder mat history, in his junior season (1977), Zook won the NCAA Division III Championship in the 126-pound weight class.

Francis Presley

Francis Presley left a legacy at Millersville as one of the most accomplished individual athletes in school history. As a wrestler from 1977-79, he achieved the unmatched feat of two NCAA Division III Championships.

Don Wagner

As a heavyweight for the Marauders, Don Wagner reached the pinnacle of Division III wrestling during his sophomore season of 1980 when he won the national championship.

Shane Ruhnke

In 2019 Shane Ruhnke won Millersville's first NCAA Championship since 1980. Ruhnke was awarded the title of Most Dominant Wrestler of the Year and the Most Outstanding Wrestler of the NCAA Championships.

MICROSOFT PANEL FEATURED 'VILLE'S DR. KAREN RICE

I am so proud of our many hard-working faculty members here at Millersville. Their contributions to the classroom and beyond are to be commended. Recently, our own Dr. Karen Rice, department chair for the School of Social Work, was selected to represent the University at a Global Government Forum webinar hosted by Microsoft.

The webinar, called [Information is Power: How Tech is Transforming Public Sector Sustainability](#), took place earlier this month and focused on how to achieve the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. Those goals were set and agreed upon by top world leaders in 2015 as a way to combat poverty, inequality, climate change and more. As an institution, this is just one way that MU is doing its part to build a better future for everyone.

Dr. Rice shared examples of how faculty, staff and students collaborate with our community partners to identify and implement solutions to current challenges to help realize the Global Goals. She pointed to the mini-grants awarded to members of the MU community through the Positive Energy Fund. Rice also noted that the goals are strongly aligned with social work values and mirror social work's focus on individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities that contribute to health and well-being. Please extend your congratulations to Dr. Rice on this great honor.