THE PANDEMIC ISSUE

EXCLUSIVE!
DR. WUBAH
Interview with Millersville’s President

PHOTO COURTESY OF MU TWITTER
A note from our editors

Our team has worked really hard to capture how Millersville University and the surrounding Lancaster area has been impacted by COVID-19 through these stories. Adapting to a new virtual world this past year has not been easy to say the least, but I’m so proud of how my team has come together and remained positive throughout these challenging times.

The Snapper hopes to encapsulate this moment in our history when the world faced a global pandemic, and share Millersville’s perspective on how our community came together to keep our campus safe.

I’m so proud of our team for coming together to write and create our first magazine of the spring 2021 semester. This past year we’ve been completely online and it’s been challenging, but being a a part of our Snapper family has made things 100 times more bearable. We have enjoyed putting this magazine together and showcasing COVID during college. It has been a crazy past year, and hopefully our magazine can give you some insight while also making light of the year.

We hope you enjoy our magazine edition. On the right you can find a color coded key that shows how the magazine is organized. Enjoy!

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Millersville University’s President, Dr. Daniel Wubah describes his experiences throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and provides insight on how he thought the university reacted to the spread of the coronavirus.
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Millersville sports during COVID-19

By Daniela McCurdy & Designed By Caleb Wolfe
Fall sports have been through the ringer this past year. The teams found out in summer 2020 that they wouldn't be having a fall season. They would then later find out that a spring season would be highly unlikely. Women's Soccer is one team too familiar with this.

Currently the women have a lot going on with their training and lifting schedule. As of March 15, 2021, the restrictions on the field regarding covid became not as taxing as the previous season. Players no longer have to be in pods of eight and can now play as a full team once again. The only requirement is that they wear a mask when in the Carpenter-Trout gym and when walking to the field.

Each team member is required to fill out a covid screen every morning for trainers to look over. These screens consist of a temperature check and a series of questions, followed by another in person temp check once you’re on the field. For all athletes right now it’s crucial everyone practices social distancing and safety measures.

Senior, Lauren Downey knows how important all the small things are, “Everyone here wants to play and get to practice so everyone’s been doing the right thing with practicing safe habits. If we’re not all practicing safe habits then we don’t get to play, which no one wants.” All the ladies know how important it is to maintain these habits so they can play again. This might make you wonder how everyone is staying motivated to train so hard everyday, since no games are even guaranteed as of now. Head Coach Matthew Procopio is definitely a key role to all of this staying afloat.

“[Use this] opportunity to grow and get better. Use the time you have now to improve and work on things you may not normally get to. We are focused on preparing now for 2021,” says Procopio.

The team is really looking forward to getting their fall season back to play games once again. For now
practices are largely based on not just team growth, but individual growth as well. Not playing for almost a year has given the team a chance to really improve in any area they wanted to personally. This involves a lot of practicing on their own when they have time.

Sophomore, Savannah Rennix knows exactly how to stay on track, “we check in on one another and are constantly in communication keeping each other accountable for what we do outside of practice,” she said.

Times like these in sports can either bring teams together or drive them apart. For the team it seems to be that they are closer and more motivated than ever before. Right now is all about taking risks and working day by day.

“Something that I learned from this pandemic is to live your life to the fullest and to surround yourself with people you love” said sophomore, Juliana Carrara.

I think many people can agree with that, especially the oldest girls on the team. Last season seniors did not get to play out their final year of collegian soccer. The NCAA did grant them another year of eligibility, but as you can tell nothing is promised.

When asked about getting back to some sort of normalcy, Sophomore, Bailey Hunt said, “I am really looking forward to the game day feeling we once all knew. I know we probably won’t get that for a while but having people in the stands and walking out with your team knowing you are about to compete is one of the best feelings I have ever experienced and I look forward to experiencing it again.”

The women’s soccer team is one resilient group of girls that are clearly working hard on and off the field. The team is looking to take on their 2021 season this fall, competing in the PSAC and bringing more wins home to the Ville.
Millersville Releases Sports Attendance Policies

By Caleb Wolfe

With campus sports returning in less than a week, many students were unsure if they would be watching the games from the sidelines or the computer screen. Thankfully, Millersville Athletics announced a list of attendance policies that will not only allow people to attend these games, but more importantly do so in a safe manner.

The list provided by the Millersville Athletics website specifies the following rules for spectators of any Millersville University event:

• Fans must wear a face covering or mask at all times.
• Fans must remain physically distant from other families or groups when moving throughout the venue and waiting in a line.
• Fans must remain in their “seating pod” with their family or group and remain physically distanced from others when moving throughout the spectator seating area. Sitting with another group or family is prohibited.
• Fans are not permitted to interact with student-athletes, coaches, team personnel, or officials at any time. This also applies to family members of these individuals.
• Fans are encouraged to review venue health and safety guidelines prior to arrival.
• Fans are not permitted to tailgate or gather in groups on University property pre or post game.

Millersville Athletics instructs that these rules be properly followed at all times, and that failure to comply with any of the rules may result in an expulsion from the event and venue.

Obviously these rules only apply to home games played on campus, and the rules for matches held at other Universities may vary. On that note, tickets are not being sold to members of the general public nor fans of visiting teams. Therefore, it’s very likely the same precedent will prevent fans of Millersville to attend their away games.

In the case of ticketing, priority is being given to the families of student athletes. A smaller number of tickets will then be available for members of the Black & Gold Club, alumni, Millersville University staff, faculty, and students. Notably, these tickets must be pre-registered through the Millersville Athletics website prior to each home game.

Finally, and most importantly, the website states that these policies were established to provide a safe environment while keeping in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Health requirements for gatherings. Furthermore, live broadcasts will be available on the Ville Sports Network for any fans unable to attend.
March 11, 2021 marked a full year of pandemic quarantine. The year that has been forcing young socialites into owners of a lonely heart.

The people that have been actively looking for a partner during this time have to rely on dating apps, or perhaps one fateful stale zoom session amongst peers. Even if one is lucky enough to ‘score’ a date, the social rules for that date have escalated from zero-to-sixty.

One could have what was once a normal date with the risk of catching COVID-19, a virus that has killed over 500,000 people in the United States. On the other hand, one could try to make the most of a socially distanced date via a hike or FaceTime. The podcast “Death, Sex and Money” created by WNYC Studios, interviewed a woman about dating during Coronavirus, and she stated that a grocery trip to Costco was one of the best dates she’s ever had. The need for intimacy hasn’t just been put on notice of the young.

In recent hearings for the COVID-19 relief package, Senator Bernie Sanders states, “You got young people, who want to go to
school, [they] want to socialize, want to date, want to do things that young people want to do.”

I spoke with a handful of students at Millersville University who shared their frustrations with their dating lives right now. Most of them share the same plight, they aren’t really meeting anybody right now. Millersville University only has a handful of classes in person and the West Village dorm building is completely vacant. Students right now are meeting potential partners through “Zoom University” or dating apps.

One sophomore shared that she has been using the dating apps with no luck. “I’ve been using these apps for months and I know we are in a pandemic but, boys are really boring.”

Another Millersville junior, who is one of the few that has classes on campus, says she’s developed a crush for one of the boys in her class. Although she’s not 100% sure what he looks like because of the mandated masks in class. “I’ve tried looking him up on Instagram but haven’t found him, there are apparently dozens of guys with private accounts with the same name and hair” she says.

Even though there have been strict restrictions in regards to a zero-tolerance policy around bringing outside students into the dorms, RA’s at Millersville have reported that students have tried to sneak in.

Not every student at Millersville has had difficulties with dating on campus. Trinity Young (19), a sophomore RA at Millersville fortunately met her boyfriend Logan (21), just before the pandemic. In March, students were forced to vacate from the dorms to resume classes online for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester.

Trinity experienced a “the sky is falling” moment just before she confessed her feelings to Logan. “He had a girlfriend at the time so I was okay being the really good friend and waiting for my chance. I could pull a Jim Halpert from “The Office.” Then Covid hit and I thought, oh my god I have to tell him I like him” she says.

Trinity and Logan began their relationship together, but apart. Time together was spent through FaceTime, Snapchat and playing PlayStation online with one another in the late hours of the night. Trinity’s parents were very concerned more about the coronavirus than the new boy in their daughter’s life.

Before finally spending time together in person, they embarked on the newly formed tradition of celebrating two negative covid tests. From then on trust was granted with each other’s parents, due to Trinity and Logan being covid free. Trinity remembers trust being important when she wanted to visit Logan for his birthday.

“I wanted to spend time with him during his birthday and I honestly didn’t know how many people were going to be there, thankfully my parents trusted me into letting me do that. Though I feel bad that I was lying to my parents about there only being a small number of people” says Trinity.

A positive test in the family or with a friend wasn’t too uncommon and that put things on hold for Trinity and Logan. Though Trinity does admit that COVID-19 helped strengthen their relationship, she states, “Dating him was definitely slow at the beginning since we couldn’t really be together in person. But that time apart let us really talk to one another, figure each other out. I think that helped a lot with our relationship, making it stronger than previous relationships I’ve had.”

Friends of Trinity have shared their jealousy with her relationship with Logan. When asked what Trinity’s friends thought of dating, Trinity responded with “They would say it sucks and that is putting it the best way possible.”

There is hope for young singles. Vaccines are rolling out and President Biden is expecting to have most adults vaccinated by July 4. Hopefully there is a summer this year for young people to do “young people” things.
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COVID-19 VACCINE:
What do we know about it?

By Connor Woods &
Designed By Julia Meassick
Where are we now with COVID-19?

Since March 2020, COVID-19 has ravaged the United States and the world. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are over 28 million cases in the US and counting (CDC, n.d.). Additionally, over 500,000 deaths have been reported across America. Since the first positive case in the United States was recorded roughly a year ago, the virus has created chaos and confusion in these uncharted waters.

Some effects caused by the pandemic include the nursing home crisis, mask mandates, and Covid deniers. Efforts to stem the curve from mask mandates to social distancing were able to minimize the virus’s transportation to some extent; however, the coronavirus still rampaged on. According to biospace.com, in summer 2020, both Pfizer and Moderna started researching, developing and creating vaccines to fight the coronavirus (Brothers, 2020). Nonetheless, these vaccines are expensive.

According to healthline.com, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer and Moderna received at least $456 million in research and development with funds from the United States federal government (healthline.com, n.d.).

In a short time, scientists from Moderna, Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson, and the CDC created multiple vaccines and countermeasures to stem the curve even more and minimize the effects caused by COVID-19. These different vaccines come with varying degrees of effectiveness, eligibility, and side effects.

Types of Vaccines

As of March 2021, there were three unique COVID-19 vaccines ready for administration. Since its approval by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in December 2020, the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine paved the way for the development and support of multiple vaccinations. In particular, all three vaccines treat Americans at least 16 years of age and older, since COVID-19 tends to target people in that age group, while the elderly are more susceptible.

Both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines require two doses, which means they are administered twice in one month. For example, if someone were first vaccinated on February 2, 2021, they would receive the second round around March 2, 2021, depending on the vaccination site and availability.

Since both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are relatively identical, they cannot be mixed. According to Steve Bunin of KING-TV, renowned scientist Dr. Larry Corey explained, “The first dose and the second dose are identical. [You can not mix] Pfizer and Moderna, but what’s in that syringe is identical. The Pfizer first dose is the same as the Pfizer second dose, and [so is] the Moderna vaccine” (Bunin, 2021).

As a result, it is recommended to take the Pfizer shots three weeks apart, while Moderna requires at least four weeks. The most recently approved vaccine, manufactured by Johnson & Johnson, is a single-dose. This means the vaccination is one-and-done.

There are two types of COVID-19 vaccines that are available: mRNA and adenovirus. mRNA vaccines are developed using message RNA technology. According to Millersville’s physician Dr. Timothy Weaver, “The vaccine takes mRNA and uses a nano-lifted particle to deliver replication.” Adenovirus vaccines take that adenovirus, which is relatively harmless to humans and attach the spike protein for COVID-19.

Weaver further explained, “We use that adenovirus to deliver that to our bodies so that we can make antibodies against that spike protein within the adenovirus vector vaccine. There’s a handful of those and the one that is currently authorized in the US is the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, who worked with Janssen Pharmaceutical to create this vaccine. Depending on what data you look at, it’s maybe 60 to 70% effective. The other adenovirus vector vaccine out there is the AstraZeneca vaccine and is being developed in Oxford and a company in India. That vaccine is getting used in the United Kingdom and is about 60 to 70% effective.”
How effective is each vaccine?

The efficacy rate, or the rate of effectiveness against a disease, depends on the manufactured vaccine. According to the CDC, the Moderna vaccination has an effectiveness rate of 94.1% “at preventing laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 illness in people who received two doses who had no evidence of being previously infected” (CDC, n.d.).

The Pfizer vaccine has a similar rate of 95% of effectiveness against moderate to severe cases of COVID-19, as mentioned by Helen Branswell of statnews.com. That means that both vaccines can minimize COVID-19 to a degree similar to the standard flu vaccine. As Bunin put it, “Pfizer and Moderna both reported their vaccines are roughly 95% effective in preventing the virus, but a person needs two shots to get that level of protection.” Lastly, the newest COVID-19 vaccine by Johnson & Johnson has an efficacy rate of 66%.

Even though this is lower than the other two vaccinations, it has some good news. Branswell explained, “It was 85% effective in protecting against severe disease. And there were no hospitalizations or deaths among people in the vaccine arm of a large clinical trial.” To summarize, that means 66% of people get Covid but prevents 100% of COVID-19-related hospitalizations and deaths.

“It’s not really that 95%, but it is still pretty decent on its own, and if you look at it causing it preventing serious common infection or death that then the numbers look much better, so it does really help prevent the terrible outcomes of COVID much better than 60%, but just for preventing symptomatic covert illness, the efficacy is about 66% somewhere between 60 and 70%” says Weaver.

Who is eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

As mentioned earlier, anyone ages 16 years of age and up can receive any of the three available vaccines. However, there are multiple phases depending on the state. For Pennsylvania, there are four phases: 1A, 1B, 1C, and 2.

In Phase 1A, healthcare workers, along with essential services (i.e., emergency managers and frontline workers) and people with high-risk medical conditions (such as cancer and obesity) are among the first to receive the vaccines.

In Phase 1B, US Postal Service workers and teachers obtain the COVID-19 vaccine. Following the second stage, people belonging to Phase 1C get the vaccines. These people include but are not limited to: transportation workers, media, and public safety employees.

Lastly, the general public or anyone in the first three phases who did not receive the COVID-19 vaccines can accept any of the three available vaccinations.
**What are the side effects?**

Similar to any vaccine, there are side effects. Some of the common ones discovered by the CDC and the manufacturers include pain, redness, swelling, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever, and nausea. Fortunately, these are relatively normal and can be self-treated by frequently exercising the arm where the vaccine was injected. It has also been recommended to dress lightly and drink plenty of fluids, preferably water. However, in the off chance that someone develops an allergic reaction or notices any swelling and/or tenderness, it is recommended to notify their doctor about it immediately (CDC, n.d.).

Dr. Weaver comments, “If you get a generic immunogenicity response, which creates an immune response in the body, where your arm is sore and tired, and maybe you feel feverish or chills, you can use Tylenol or Ibuprofen, which is Motrin and Advil. The current guidance is that if you develop symptoms after the vaccine, feel free to use Tylenol, Motrin, or Advil. Still, we do not encourage individuals to pretreat with Tylenol or Motrin just in case or to ward off or prevent feeling bad.”

“There is some evidence that if you take Tylenol or Motrin, or any of those sorts of pain relievers, they might decrease the vaccine’s effectiveness. Your immune system might not create a robust response if you start taking pain relievers right away before getting the vaccine. If you feel significantly worse after the vaccine, go ahead and take Tylenol, Motrin, or Advil at the regular recommended over-the-counter dosages. There is some concern, probably more strongly outside of the US than inside the US, about using anti-inflammatories” says Weaver.

COVID-19 has definitely altered our regular daily routines. We have to wear masks when out in public, stay at least six feet away from other people, and continuously disinfect surfaces where COVID-19 particles may exist. To subdue the panic caused by the corona-navirus, pharmaceutical companies have created vaccines to ensure a close to a normal lifestyle.

The vaccines currently available significantly stem the curve and minimize the effects (both internal and external) created by COVID-19. While life may not return to normal anytime soon, these vaccines will act as a way to get as close to it as possible.
THE STEPS MILLERSVILLE’S took to keep

By Carly O’Neill & Kylie Stolftz fus
INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM

our campus safe
The Incident Management Team (IMT) was established by Millersville University in March of 2020 to help ensure the safety of students, staff, and faculty during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Snapper recently had the opportunity to interview several members of the Incident Management Team on the part they played in reducing the amount of COVID-19 cases on campus.

Patrick Weidinger, the Director of Environmental Health and Safety, comments on how the IMT played a crucial role in getting asymptomatic testing in place for the spring semester of 2021 to randomly selected students and staff. The data collected from these coronavirus tests helped the university and IMT ensure Millersville’s low covid cases.

Millersville’s physician, Dr. Timothy Weaver explains how health services contributed to the health and safety of Millersville’s community by screening all personnel who stepped foot onto campus.

“At the very beginning we were screening everybody that was coming to campus with symptom screening and temperature screening. We were here outside of health services at 5:30 in the morning, checking all the employees that came through,” says Weaver.

IMT acquired thermal temperature scanners that were placed at different locations around campus to help with this screening process for any student, staff or faculty member who was looking to enter an academic building.

“IMT and health services provided a lot of education during these uncertain times as everything was changing and evolving. The nurses were handling up to like 170 phone calls a day at the peak,” says Weaver.

Dr. Duane Hagelgans sheds light on the precautions Millersville put in place to decrease the amount of COVID-19 cases.

“I think that as things changed, as things fluctuated, as cases went up and down, we made a lot of adjustments. But at each point, I think the university was very adaptable. I think the most important thing we did was we maintained a conservative approach, when a lot of universities didn’t,” says Hagelgans. “Ultimately, the students, staff, and faculty have gone above and beyond at Millersville.”

Co-Chair, Victor DeSantis believes Millersville has taken all the necessary precautions since the spring of 2020 to combat the amount of Millersville’s covid cases. “We took very aggressive action in early March to completely shutdown the campus and to move everything online for spring break on, and to move all university employees off campus for the rest of the semester,” he says.

Millersville had two weeks to adapt to what would become a new virtual reality of learning and working online. Millersville’s Residence Hall staff had to quickly put in place a plan to essentially unpack the university’s dorms, since students were no longer allowed to stay on campus after spring break.

According to Weaver, “We were able to start tracking our cases at the front of the curve... When we look at our case numbers, I think they really reflect that good response and the success we were able to have with what the administration has been doing and with what the students and the faculty and staff have all been contributing too.”

In the fall of 2020, Millersville required students to use the LiveSafe app prior to attending any in-person classes on campus. The app would ask students if they were experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms or had come in contact with anyone with COVID in the past 14 days. If students received a green check mark at the end of the questionnaire, then they were cleared to come to campus with a face covering.

The use of the LiveSafe has died down since the beginning of the 2021 spring semester, but Weidinger still encourages students to use it to track their symptoms. “The LiveSafe app is really just to give people a tool to remind them that they shouldn’t just come to campus
if they’re feeling ill.”

Millersville saw a spike in covid cases in February of the spring semester, due to what Weaver thinks was students attending parties and contributing to the spread of the virus.

“We started seeing more and more sick people coming to be tested at health services and we started to see an increase in the asymptomatic testing. We saw those numbers go up dramatically and then those numbers dropped off,” says Weidinger.

Due to students being proactive and seeking medical attention through health services, the spike in cases quickly decreased, returning Millersville’s coronavirus cases back to minimal.

“The university’s response to those increases was a good one. We pushed out information right away to everyone on campus saying we’re having a spike here” says Weidinger. “The general overall responsibility level of our faculty, staff, and especially our students. I think they knew we had a spike, let’s get it under control. That is something I think that is very commendable for Millersville University.”

As Millersville University makes plans to host in-person commencement events in May and reopen campus in the fall, the Incident Management Team is advocating for students and faculty to be vaccinated when they are able.

“In terms of just safety and mitigation and keeping the campus safe as we progress forward, vaccination is going to be a key component to that,” says Weaver.

“We have to remember that we are just one country in a world of people that are infected with covid. Even if we have everything under control in the United States, we would be surrounded by other people who may not,” says Long. “When is that day going to come when we can move on from all of this? The sooner the better. We are certainly hopeful.”

According to Patrick Weidinger, Millersville’s Health Services was willing to step up and run a vaccination clinic prior to the county deciding to take a centralized approach, opening a mass vaccination site at Park City Mall.

Hagelgans thinks that several of the COVID-19 precautions, such as frequent handwashing and masking will continue to be habitual for many even after the wide-spread vaccination rollout. “I think there will be no going back to some of the ways we live and work on campus,” says Hagelgans.

Prior to the pandemic, Millersville did not have formal policies in place that pertained to remote working and teleworking. The University worked quickly to develop policies as the pandemic unfolded. According to the Incident Management Team, there will be long lasting implications for the way inter-
Dr. Wubah’s take on how Millersville faced COVID-19

By Carly O’Neill
Millersville University’s President, Dr. Daniel Wubah describes his experiences throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and provides insight on how he thought the university reacted to the spread of the coronavirus.

“My experience is rooted in my background as a microbiologist. As a microbiologist, I’m very familiar with emerging pathogens. Those that are in the animals are the ones we are most sceptical to. When they jump from animals to humans, that is what in most cases causes these pandemics. That’s my foundation in terms of looking at this pandemic,” says Wubah.

In February of 2020 when COVID-19 was first arising, Millersville activated it’s Incident Management Team (IMT) to start thinking about the potential of the micronism spreading to campus. Two weeks after the team was activated, the university was forced to close its doors.

According to Dr. Wubah, “Being aware of the potential of such a disease helped us to start planning ahead of time before we were forced to shutdown the campus.”

“Once the pandemic got to our shores, I learned something about American culture that previously I knew, but it was actually in practice that as Americans our freedom is very important and we demand that there are certain rights that we don’t give up or compromise on. That in a way may have contributed to the spread of the pathogen here more than other places,” says Dr. Wubah.

The collaborative effort of both the Millersville staff and faculty was essential to Millersville University moving all its face-to-face classes completely online in the course of two weeks. “I was very impressed with how our employees, especially the faculty adapted to the changes that were required of them for us to keep going,” says Dr. Wubah.

**Reflection**

Looking back on this past year, Dr. Wubah comments, “In an effort to react, I learned that in hindsight maybe we should’ve handled certain situations differently.”

One of these instances included how the university decided back in August of 2020, that students would return to an accelerated fall semester with no breaks until Thanksgiving. “We should’ve built in some breaks for students. After every four weeks of class, give them a day or so off, and spread it throughout the semester,” says Dr. Wubah.

After listening to students voicing their concerns about how stressful the previous spring semester had been with no breaks in between, the university decided to incorporate multiple breaks into the spring 2021 semester.

Another instance that President Wubah expresses he would’ve handled differently, was the timeline of support systems and workshops that were created for the faculty to learn how to teach online. These weren’t put in place until January of 2021. “The focus on online teaching wasn’t as clear as we should’ve had it. The online instructional professional development should be built into our culture,” says Dr. Wubah.

**What will next semester look like?**

“Putting on my microbiologist hat, the first thing I would say is, next academic year our goal is to bring students back to campus this fall. But, we are still going to continue practicing safety and
healthy behaviors in order not to spread this pathogen in our community,” says Dr. Wubah.

Dr. Wubah stresses to the Millersville community as vaccines are distributed, to keep in mind that the coronavirus pathogen is not going to simply go away. “We’ve learned so many things during this pandemic, and some of them we have to continue practicing post-pandemic. I will be looking for faculty members to continue using a hybrid blended model to add value to the face-to-face experiences.

“We are now more sensitised to the possibility of passing on this pathogen from one person to the other. It’s likely we will be taking down plexiglasses with time, when everyone is vaccinated. For the foreseeable future, maybe the next year or so, we will have to use face coverings and be mindful of health and safety,” says Dr. Wubah.

**Innovations to stay post-pandemic**

According to Dr. Wubah, “We’ve been forced to think outside the box and do things that we never imagined we could do.” Before Covid, faculty members would have to submit binders worth of paperwork for tenure or a promotion, and review this paperwork at a specific location. Since the pandemic, this process has now been digitized.

“There were some faculty members who wanted to still do the paper aspect, but now they don’t have a choice. If they are in a year when they have to submit materials for promotion and tenure and we are in a pandemic, we’re not going to be able to get faculty in one room to do their reviews. At the moment they can do all their reviews remotely using Zoom,” says Dr. Wubah.

The pandemic has also forced Millersville to adapt to Docusign, which allows members of the university to digitally sign documents. Dr. Wubah comments, “I used to print every document and sign it with a pen. That printer isn’t working now because it has to use the WIFI, [and] because of our current situation, I can’t print anything. If we had Docusign, hopefully I could even use my cellular to be able to sign documents.”

COVID-19 has also challenged the university to look at where cuts can be made. Dr Wubah elaborates, “As a result of the pandemic we started thinking about physical printing, so we brought in a third party to look at what we have as the current number of printers. We have over 160 printers on this campus. As an institution, we are focused on sustainability.”

In hopes to cut both costs and the university’s carbon footprint, Millersville was told it could decrease the current amount of printers on campus by 50 percent. “It’s going to save us over $100,000 a year. It is an innovation that is going to help the university,” says Dr. Wubah. “Necessity once again has forced us to come up with innovative ways of doing things.”

The recent online way of learning hasn’t put a damper on how Dr. Wubah is looking to the future. “It hasn’t changed my perception because I already believed in online education. I’ve taught online classes before at my previous institutions, so I’m already committed to it. It has strengthened my commitment to using online education as part of what we do,” he says.

In February, 2020 Millersville only had 17 percent of its classes being delivered online. Only one month later, in the span of two weeks, the university had to go 100 percent online. “After the pandemic, I don’t think we’re going to go back to 17 percent. It is likely that we may end up with 30 or 40 percent of our classes now [which] are going to be online,” says Dr. Wubah.

According to President Wubah, “This pandemic has strengthened my resolve to make the online platform available to our faculty to use in their interactions with students. It provides asynchronous experiences that you typically don’t get, because students can post questions, students can have interactions with their faculty members at times that if you have only face-to-face classes would not be possible.”

**Takeaways**

Overall, looking back at how Millersville has handled COVID-19, Dr. Wubah describes, “The way we came together as a community and went our way through this pandemic, I’m so proud of that.”

Dr. Wubah reiterates how important communication was at the beginning of the pandemic. He made sure to keep the Millersville community updated by sending out weekly messages through email on the current reported cases on campus, as well as what measures the university was taking to ensure the health and safety
of its students.

“I was very impressed that I started getting feedback from faculty, students, and staff that they read the information I sent out. So they were paying attention to what as a university we were doing collectively,” says Dr. Wubah.

The collective workings of IMT especially have been crucial to keeping Millersville’s COVID cases low throughout the past year. “IMT has been shepherding what we’ve been doing since last fall through the semester, to the end of this academic year. As we speak now, we are already putting together a team that’s going to start planning for 2021 and how our campus is going to be as we reopen and students and faculty come back to campus,” says Dr. Wubah.

Dr. Wubah touches on the important takeaways from the pandemic, “One, we have to be resilient as a community, we have to work together as a community, and we should be mindful of the fact that what one person does can impact the whole community,” he says. “I’ve learned to react as quickly as possible. We went from students going home for one week for spring break and coming back the following week, to them being away close to a year now.”

Advice for future generations

President Wubah shares some final words of wisdom for the Millersville community to think about as we start the transition back to life post a global pandemic.

Dr. Wubah comments, “What we do today will determine what Millersville will look like in 2050. My advice to future generations is this: after this pandemic we’ve learned so much and whatever documentation or artifacts that we’ll put together from this experience should be available to them. But, they should pay attention to the kind of community they have before a crisis or case.”

“My suggestion to them is they should maintain or they should work hard to sustain this Millersville characteristic of being a community that works together, that thrives, so that when there is a crisis...they will be able to handle it” says Dr. Wubah.
COVID-19 has taxed people and systems across the country since the onset of the pandemic in spring of 2020. The most strain has perhaps been placed upon the healthcare system and its workers, and Millersville's Health Services team is no different. On the frontline, Millersville healthcare workers have been working hard to keep students safe.

At the beginning of the pandemic in March of last year, the country as a whole didn’t know much about COVID-19, and the Millersville medical staff faced an unprecedented challenge. They began meeting with the Incident Management Team (IMT) on campus to put plans into motion to protect staff and students. Lauren O Blevins, a nurse practitioner, recalled, “We had to spring into action, and do some critical thinking on how we were going to provide adequate care…comprehensive care to our students at the same time as protecting our staff.”

They worked hard to get personal protective equipment and testing supplies for COVID-19 at a time when these supplies were in high demand, and they had to change how they met with students. When possible, they began meeting with students over Zoom and Microsoft Teams video calls. Additionally, they developed an outdoor facility to see patients in an open-air environment. The reality of healthcare is that in-person meetings are often necessary, and risk reduction for both patients and nurses was necessary.

As more information about the virus was collected, Health Services kept up to date, listening to the CDC and following their recommendations. They also got information from the Pennsylvania Department of health and stayed in contact with the Lancaster County Department of Health and the American College Health Association.

By the summer, they began testing students who had
symptoms or exposure. This testing process has continued throughout the pandemic, making use of the outdoor facilities to maintain safety as much as possible. Asymptomatic carriers of COVID-19 have been a big problem in the spread of the virus, and the Health Services team has implemented screening for that as well.

Twice a week in Luke Hall, they perform surveillance testing on randomly selected employees and staff working on campus. Voluntary testing of students in campus housing, student athletes, and students in field placement are conducted. Using an app called Naviga, students can link their test card to their phone. Rapid antigen tests are conducted, which have students in and out within just five minutes, and their results are sent to their phones through Naviga.

If one of these tests comes back positive, an in-house confirmatory PCR test is done, which is the same test used on symptomatic students. In the last year, one of the struggles for the public was getting access to a Covid test, so having access to testing through Health Services at no additional cost was hugely beneficial to students, especially those with symptoms.

Besides testing, Health Services also implemented a Covid screening app and contact tracing to help mitigate the spread of the virus on campus. Piggybacking off of Millersville’s LiveSafe app, any students, employees, or visitors coming to campus completed the screening in the app.

Anybody who answered yes to the questions about having symptoms or contact with the virus automatically had their information emailed to Health Services, who then contacted the students to follow up with whether or not they needed testing or to go into isolation. Being able to quickly identify individuals that had close contact with the virus made it easier to quarantine them...
from the rest of the university to prevent potential outbreaks.

Health Services has worked closely with the Incident Management Team since the beginning of the pandemic. Any positive tests are reported to IMT. These tallies are what is shown on the University’s Covid dashboard. Keeping a close eye on numbers and where they are coming from allows students and staff to know if they have been exposed. It also allows the identification of potential Covid hotspots so Health Services can intervene and prevent the spread.

2020 has been a year marked by change and adaptation. Life has looked drastically different for students and staff and adapting to that change has been an enormous hurdle for most people.

Nurse Practitioner Blevins noted that, “nurses are inherently critical thinkers and have to always adapt to our environment because it is always changing a lot. Most of our nurses have hospital training, and when you work in a hospital, you have to be ready to go on a dime as things can change.”

This experience and training allowed the Health Services team to flourish during the pandemic and alleviate the community’s fears despite the fears they may have been facing on their end. When the virus was new, the risks associated with it were not known, but the nurses still saw students that had Covid, and a few members of the team were infected and had to quarantine.

Despite this situation, the team still showed up to work and continued to mitigate the spread on campus. They became a reliable hub for Covid information and received sometimes hundreds of phone calls a day from parents and students worried in the early days of the virus.

Part of stopping the spread is having a plan for when students need to go into quarantine or isolation. Those students with possible exposure must quarantine in place, and those with positive test results must isolate for ten days. To manage this process, Health Services began a relationship with Housing. If students that are confined to their rooms are feeling poorly, Health Services checks in with them to make sure they are improving. They send an updated list to Housing to make sure they know which students are under quarantine and which students who opted to return home for the duration of their quarantine are allowed to return to campus. Housing makes sure the students receive food and other necessities.

The Health Services team, which is comprised of registered nurses Smith, Hess, Meraner, Smith-Troy, and Kirchner, administrative assistant Gordner, nurse supervisor Ocasio, part-time contracted physician Weaver, and nurse practitioner Blevins, have worked hard throughout the pandemic even when other staff had not yet returned to campus.

Nurse practitioner Blevins stated, “I can tell you, it was tough, there were some days that really made us feel a bit broken. But we kept coming back every day, and kept pushing it because we really truly care about the university, and we really care about our students and want to see them succeed. We want to get to the point where they can return to campus and have some normalcy.”

I believe everyone is craving normalcy as the pandemic looks to be waning. It is fair to say many people have been dealt a blow to their physical and mental health over the past year, and healing students and the community has been at the core of Health Services mission from day one.

Looking forward to the fall 2021 semester, the first semester back to in-person since the pandemic started, it is reassuring that there are protocols and staff in place to keep the campus safe, happy, and healthy.
In this section you’ll find:

pg. 28: Covid impacts local landmark in the Fulton Theater

pg. 31: Millersville students discuss their plans for Stimulus Checks

pg. 32: The Snapper staff shares what new hobbies or skills they learned in quarantine

pg. 34: Millersville students share their perspectives on Covid
The Fulton Theatre
Keeping the Art Alive

By Nick Hughes

PHOTO COURTESY OF ERIC PUGH
Lancaster, east of Millersville University, is a city full of history. Lancaster even called itself the capital of the United States at one point in this country’s history. Almost right next to the Ware Center, on 12 North Prince Street, is the Fulton Theatre.

The Fulton is a historical landmark in Lancaster and is full of stories and performances. A history of about 300 years as a building. 284 to be exact when it was first built as a jail before the revolutionary war. Many years later, The Fulton is still standing and still has a beating heart to deliver the art.

The Fulton put on many shows in their time as a theatre and. Thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic, they had to close their doors to the public for live shows. Doing this, of course, protects the employees as well as anyone who might have wanted to see a show at the Fulton.

What happens to the Fulton now that they cannot do shows. Eric Pugh, Fulton's marketing director was optimistic when interviewed. Even though some employees lost their jobs, some were able to keep them and still work for Fulton.

Pugh put it, “We have tried to keep the art going.” This has not been an easy undertaking for them. The Covid-19 pandemic has taken its toll on that of the art community as a whole and the Fulton is no exception to this.

Due to the pandemic, the theatre postponed all live performances. Several shows became postponed, and they included Kinky Boots, Titanic, and Jersey Boys. The Fulton hopes to return to live performances. They have come up with some creative ways to get the art out there. Safety is the biggest concern, and it makes sense why.

How is Fulton continuing the art though? This has been an area of growth for Fulton as they have had to come up with ways to get their art to the people. They have been working hard on getting the per-
forming arts center finished and ready to go for when they will be able to re-open.

One such way is the website called Fulton HD. This platform has performances that are worked on in the theater. There are performances that viewers can register and watch for free on this website.

The latest show that was made available to watch is called Songs of Ireland, which is a benefit for the Fulton theatre. It is an hour long show that can be viewed on The Fulton's web platform called Fulton HD. The show is free to watch, but the theatre asks for donations on the site to help with costs.

In a Facebook update, Marc Robin, Fulton's Executive Artistic Producer, stated that they are hard at work getting the performing arts center up and running and went on to announce that the Fulton would be partnering with the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra for a new artistic project.

The Lancaster Symphony will be playing in the Fulton and the concert will be uploaded to both of their web platforms. The songs that will be played, according to Guy McIntosh of the Lancaster Symphony in the same video will be, A Soldier's tale and A Fiddlers tale.

That is what Fulton is currently doing, but how did they get through the pandemic? Well, the short answer, is that everyone is still coping with the pandemic. Fulton partnered with WGAL news to put on performance over the Summer. It helped raise funds to help the Fulton stay on its feet. The telethon benefit raised about 400,000 dollars. This helped the Fulton get through a rough summer.

The Fulton has committed itself to keep the art alive in Lancaster. When safe Millersville students can once again attend shows. Until then, help support the arts and watch the various shows that Fulton has put on its web platform. Stay in tune with Fulton by subscribing to their Facebook page.

“We have tried to keep the art going.”
- Eric Pugh

PHOTO COURTESY OF ERIC PUGH
We surveyed Millersville Students on Stimulus Checks and how they spent their money.

Have you received a stimulus check over the past year?

- Yes
- No

Do you think the amount of money received was enough?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

How did you spend your stimulus money?

- Rent & Bills: 28
- Savings: 26
- Pay Off Debt: 18
- Tuition: 16
- Household Essentials: 15
- Other: 5
- Food: 3
Making the Best of a Bad Situation

We may not have written novels, lost weight, or learned any skills that society may deem as useful. But, we tried to make the best of a bad situation. We kept ourselves occupied by trying new things with our stay in lockdown. Here are the new things we tried during the Pandemic:

In December I began working as a personal care associate at a local retirement facility. The position mainly has me assisting elderly residents with daily tasks, such as walking to and from the dining hall. This has been my first job within the healthcare field and it has been a greatly impactful experience. Working as a care associate during the pandemic gave me perspective of how COVID-19 has affected those within retirement communities, as their recreational and social activities are unfortunately limited due to social distancing rules. In terms of personal pandemic activities, I’ve learned to use programs such as Zoom, Excel, and InDesign for school and personal projects. For example my friends and I often play online games together while communicating through Zoom. Recently, I’ve also been reaching an average of 550 controller inputs per minute when competing in Super Smash Brothers Melee.

Moving back home during the pandemic has been a perfect excuse to experiment more with cooking and baking. Ingredients and kitchen gadgets galore were made available to me in my family’s kitchen, and it’s always easier to take a risk with a new recipe when someone else is footing the bill and getting the first taste. I learned how to season a wok and have been attempting to dish out authentic Asian cuisine. Traditional Chinese dishes like savory beef and asparagus lo mein, fresh veggie stir fry, and sweet and salty char siu (BBQ pork), silky haw mok (Thai seafood custard) are a few of the dishes I found success with.

I’ve also taken this time to push myself into something I’m less experienced with – baking and desserts. Pastry cream, mousseline, fruit sauce, rolled cake, and panna cotta are all things I crafted in the pandemic. I don’t have much of a sweet tooth, so making something that reads as a dessert while being bright and refreshing was a fun challenge.

Life during quarantine has forced me to be more productive and also keep up with cultural trends, such as Tiger King and The Circle. I have also found myself frequenting Barnes and Noble, since one of my goals for 2021 was to start reading more. Unfortunately this goal has been put on the back burner, due to a work filled spring semester.

Luckily I was able to embrace my love of nature and hike frequently at some of my favorite destinations, such as ChesLen Preserve, French Creek State Park, and Turkey Hill Nature Preserve. Most importantly, this global pandemic has taught me to treasure every moment spent with loved ones and focus on living in the present.
Before quarantine my primary hobby was playing video games, and the pandemic has only furthered that notion. However I have elevated that hobby by livestreaming the games I play on Twitch. This has allowed me to connect with people during a time when I cannot conventionally do so, as well as make some extra money on the side. The remainder of my free time has been spent writing short stories. I’ve also considered assembling these stories into a collection and publishing it as a novel, which I would love to one day accomplish, but school and work take priority currently.

Living in Lancaster City has made enduring the pandemic a bit easier. I’ve spent more time taking midday walks around the city and getting coffee at local cafes that are open for takeout, Aura Espresso Room being a favorite. My housemate and I have tried to find ways to have fun with our friends despite the pandemic. On National Ice Cream for Breakfast day, we served waffles and ice cream from our street-level window to friends, neighbors, and strangers walking by. I’ve also watched an unhealthy amount of the Great British Baking show, Mad Men, and New Girl.

Since the beginning of the whole pandemic, I have wanted to read more. Sufficient to say, that didn’t happen, but what did happen was a new appreciation for plants and caring for them. I started slow, with just one small tree, but now I have three plants in my room. An elephant ear, the original small tree and one that I was told is called a snake plant. No idea what it’s actually called. I call them all my plant buddies. They don’t have names, even though I’m sorely tempted to give them all names from Star Wars. A plant named Vader sounds intimidating though, maybe, I’ll think about it some more.

Not only does living in a pandemic truly suck, but living in a pandemic in north-eastern Pennsylvania sucks. The summer months were fine because most of the hobbies I enjoy are spent outside in the warm weather. It wasn’t until fall and winter when quarantine got really difficult for my self-diagnosed ADHD riddled-brain. So, in a lackluster search for fun, I threw a hail-mary and downloaded the superior clone of Vine; Tiktok. I wasn’t much of a Vine teen growing up. I remember getting bizarre looks for not being into Vine during high school, then someone would make a reference to the jaunty tune of “two duuuudes sitting in a hot tub” and I had no clue what they were talking about. That being said, Tiktok is Vine but better. So I am told. Anyway, after a few weeks with the app I found myself following “#arttok” and my for you page has been flooded with many artists who draw some of the coolest things I have ever seen and some of them give drawing tutorials through Tiktok. I became inspired and one quick trip to Five Below I bought myself an art pencil kit and two blank canvass notebooks. Like many skills it takes some practice to become proficient at it. One of my notebooks is strictly used for TikTok tutorials and practices with sketching and shading. The other notebook I use as a journal. I’ve been doodling not too demanding cartoons that have some significance to the day. As of now I only have four drawings:

- The Little Caesars guy because we got the pizza for the Super Bowl
- Toad from Super Mario Bros 2 because I played it with my nephew
- Turnip Head from Studio Ghibli’s “Howl’s Moving Castle” a movie recommended by my friend Julia.
- The Duck Donuts logo for getting breakfast donuts with friends.

In all honesty, I don’t know if I want to get better at drawing because I find my childish artstyle to be charming.
“The pandemic has impacted me in many different ways, but it has overall helped me improve academically. With so many classes being asynchronous, I am able to do the work at my own pace and take my time to understand the work.” - Jessica Ramsey

“I personally have struggled a bit with the transfer to primarily online classes. I have never been much of a computer person and I certainly prefer the old-fashioned pen and paper and instructor in front of me. It’s also super distracting being at home trying to do classes when there are so many things around me that I’d rather be doing, like watching TV, playing video games, etc.” - Timothy Grimsley

“Personally, I have found the pandemic, and the ensuing lockdown to be very emotionally challenging. I transferred to Millersville during the fall of 2019. After a single semester at Millersville, I felt like I had really hit the ground running, I was making friends and taking an interest in my coursework. But halfway through my second semester, we went into lockdown. Most of the interpersonal relationships that I had been developing with new friends and peers withered away as, “two weeks” of lockdown turned into a full year.” - Curtis Oviatt
We asked Millersville students how COVID-19 has impacted their life, both on campus and off. It has been a challenging year and we wanted to shine light on the struggles of living in a pandemic and attending school all at once.

“[The pandemic] made it a challenge to always focus because of the distractions of being at home. Personally, [the pandemic has] made me think more about more of what I want to do down the road with my career post-graduation but also made me think about what is truly important in life.” -Lynnea Quintana

“As a music fan, who has attended various forms of rock shows since 2015, missing live music hurt the most. Being at shows with friends, singing along to the songs that we love to hear and just having so many great memories from my life occurred during a concert setting. I miss concerts even more now because of the fact that a live show I went to around New Year’s Eve 2019 would be my final concert.” -Brad Sacchetti

“I’m a stay-at-home father while I go to school. The thing I miss most about the pre-COVID era was driving into DC with my wife for a show at the Kennedy center, or a show (in Lancaster) at the Fulton. It’s made having bonding experiences more difficult. The Pandemic has not impacted me academically. It’s nicer to have class in person but meeting virtually doesn’t change the outcome.” -Dan Phillips
In this section you’ll find:

pg. 37: With the pandemic, work and play became unanimous with MU students

pg. 39: Millersville students on the front lines of Covid vaccine rollout

pg. 42: Student teachers are learning to teach in new ways

pg. 44: Children are struggling to learn in new hybrid environment

pg. 46: Millersville covid precautions displayed through photos
MILLERSVILLE students move to twitch

BY HOLDAN HITCHCOCK

Covid impacted students in more ways than one. Aside from going fully remote for their education, students at Millersville saw their jobs and social lives extinguish at the will of the pandemic. The students featured here look to find a way to simultaneously maintain both through content creation.
Twitch is more popular now than ever before. The streaming platform has moved away from being a place to stream video games. Twitch has also seen growth from other categories of streaming. The “just chatting” category, which shows the streamer engaging with their followers. Other popular categories include art and music. This is where Streamers create content live; such as music or art. Twitch’s rise in popularity in the past year attributes itself to the rise in popularity with video games. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic is also a major contributor. As of January 2021, Twitch has seen its highest amount of daily active users in the platform’s history.

Twitch is growing ever more popular, even with younger generations gravitating to it.

Millersville has its own Twitch Streamers. The Snapper’s own Sports Editor, Caleb Wolfe, as well as two others are practicing the craft. Wolfe streams part-time at Twitch.tv/wolfexcix.

He says the Twitch economy feels oversaturated. “There are so many streamers tied to twitch that it is so hard to differentiate yourself and grow on the platform. The first two years of streaming it was either nobody or one friend that would watch, it’s talking to yourself for a few hours.”

Wolfe’s Twitch channel has amassed 717 followers and that makes him in the top 6 percent of streamers on Twitch. Wolfe says he brings in roughly 100 dollars a month now.

There is a batch of criteria required to become monetized on the platform. The two steps for monetization are, first, being an Affiliate and then Partner.

The path to becoming an affiliate requires 500 minutes of streaming time. Then have at least seven different broadcast days, an average of three concurrent viewers or more, all within the last 30 days. As well as have at least 50 followers. To become a Twitch Partner it’s required to stream for 25 hours. As well as have 12 different days of broadcasting. Then, to top it all off, an average of 75 concurrent viewers all within a 30 day period.

All streamers can provide a donation link, usually through PayPal. The perks of being an Affiliate and Partner allow creators to profit through subscription fees. Where the creator’s followers can pay anywhere from five to 25 dollars a month to support creators. Viewers gain perks within the streams themselves. Twitch offers a donation system in the form of “Bits” which equals the value of a penny.

Some of Millersville Student/Creators have been trying to monetize their accounts. Employment during Covid-19 has been scarce. During the lockdown, students Adam Ruiz, and Wolfe feel encouraged to stream. The big reason is because of Covid.

Ruiz a transfer Sophomore started streaming a few months into the pandemic. Ruiz shared that they have gravitated to the idea to stream more during Covid-19. Alex Lin, shares this sentiment. He streams via Twitch under the username AsianUnderscoreGlow. Both needed some form of a creative outlet.

“I am a creator that [wants] to help keep a positive vibe when times are tough.” Says Ruiz. His time streaming has sparked joy and positivity.

The Super Smash Bros scene at Millersville was noteworthy before the pandemic. Ruiz organized tournaments for these events. Tournament play had come to a halt due to the pandemic. An event Ruiz misses.

Ruiz, who streams through Twitch via the username GalaticWrlrd_, is eager to share some of his music production creations soon.

When asked about their favorite parts of streaming, all three made similar comments. Their favorite part about streaming to Twitch is that they enjoy interacting with their friends and audiences. Especially during a time where this seems impossible.
Millersville students help with COVID-19 vaccine

BY KYLIE STOLTZFUS
Bethlehem Health Bureau is one of only four municipal health departments in Pennsylvania. Founded in 1980 in order to serve the needs of residents in the City of Bethlehem, the Bureau has risen to the challenge of a pandemic and vaccine distribution by also working with residents in Lehigh County and Northampton County.

The efficiency of Bethlehem Health Bureau's vaccine rollout did not go unnoticed. According to a report in the Morning Call, when the clinic initially launched, nearly 50% of getting vaccinated were coming from outside of the region. There were also instances of people booking $29 flights to fly from Florida to receive vaccines in Lehigh County, which benefits from Bethlehem Health Bureau's organization.

Because doses of the vaccine are federally funded, clinics cannot turn people away when they are eligible to receive the vaccine, especially if the patient does not have a health department in their county of residence.

In Pennsylvania, there are currently six counties with their own health departments and four municipal health departments across the Commonwealth. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, “Currently county/municipal health departments cover, at a local level, 41% of Pennsylvania’s population.”

According to Dr. Duane Hagelgans who serves on Millersville University’s Incident Management Team, the correlation between a county having a health department established and efficient vaccine rollout is evident. Lancaster County does not have its own Department of Health.

“My kickback to that is pretty simple,” says Hagelgans. “It’s not like last week, we didn’t have a Department of Health... The state knew that Lancaster and other counties don’t have a Department of Health. You can’t use that as an excuse... The state of Pennsylvania needed to have a plan, and my big headache is that everybody knew a year ago there was going to be a vaccine.”

In York County, a newsletter released by Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill of Pennsylvania’s 28th District asserted that vaccination priority was not being given to Pennsylvania residents but was rather being handled as if “finding a vaccine is like trying to get the hottest toy for Christmas.”

As of March 3, 2021, Phillips-Hill says, “there have been more than three times as many people who reside outside of the Commonwealth who have received the vaccine than York Countians. This is unacceptable.”

“What’s happening is people qualify because they’re a 1A but they’re out of state so they are coming in and taking these slots. They are getting vaccinated while people in Pennsylvania are not being vaccinated,” says Hagelgans. “The vaccines have been distributed by state. Let’s say 100 people come from New Jersey or New York and take vaccinations at one of our local hospitals, that means that 100 Pennsylvania doses of vaccine have been given to somebody in New York or New Jersey, and that’s where the lack of a system has really hurt us. I mean basically this is everybody’s out for themselves. Everybody is scrambling to figure it out.”

In a press release published on February 11, 2021, the Bethlehem Health Bureau would only be accepting vaccination appointments from residents of the City of Bethlehem, Northampton County, Lehigh County and individuals who live in a county without a health department.

Alanna Bezas, sophomore Emergency Management major at Millersville, is currently working as an intern at the Bethlehem Health Bureau. Bezas interned as an emergency manager at a community vaccination clinic located at Wind Creek Event Center in Bethlehem.

Bezas works Monday, Wednesday and Friday, alternating between working in the clinic and working in the office taking care of administrative tasks.

According to Bezas, the clinic has needed to adapt along the way. Being a clinic site that has access to both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, Bezas recounted a story of adjustments the site has had to make, “We were supposed to have a clinic with first and second doses. We didn’t get the Moderna, there was a shortage, so we didn’t get them at our clinic, which means we had to cancel or postpone all of those second dose appointments... There’s been a lot of adjustments like that where we’ve had to adapt,” says Bezas. “We’ve been learning a lot and we’ve gotten better with the clinics and how they’re run. They run pretty smoothly now.”

“I’ve had to turn people away,” says Bezas. “Sometimes they understand and sometimes they get very frustrated... We have our emergency manager who is kind of there to take them aside, explain the situation, explain why they can’t get the vaccine, and basically, the fact that we have a certain number of doses for those registered for that day so we can’t take any more.”

Philadelphia County also has its own health department. Malik Willard and Matthew Costello, currently enrolled in Millersville’s Masters in Emergency Management program, are completing their graduate capstone course in Philadelphia, working on the frontlines of the COVID-19 health crisis.

Willard and Costello are both officers in the Philadelphia Fire Department. They were asked to participate in a joint venture between the Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health and the Philadelphia Fire Department. Their first initiative was to develop a plan that would support multi-city agencies within Philadelphia to get the vaccine out to the public.

“So far it’s going pretty well,” says Willard. “It’s definitely heart felt to see the excitement of people, you know, one step closer to normalcy.”

“It’s a very rewarding experience,” says Costello. “Some people break down in tears, just very excited to be able to get the vaccine.” “Our main thing right now, other than helping the Department of Public Health by getting the vaccine, was actually reaching into underserved communities, you know, communities that are more vulnerable,” says Willard. “It’s a whole community approach of working with faith-based organizations, nonprofits, private sector, you know, just helping distribute the vaccine out to the public.”

Both Willard and Costello feel that their education through Millersville’s Emergency Management program has helped prepare them for the challenges they would encounter in their current roles.

“Coming from a guy who would just get off the backstep of a fire truck and go to work, to be taught in our Emergency Management Program how the game is played... to be plugged into our capstone, and a month after one of our last classes we are in there doing it and seeing it unfold,” says Costello. “It’s humbling. Especially because I come from such a small role in the big machine, to (seeing) how the powers at be work. I guess the best way to put it is, my entire career I’ve been a piece on the chessboard and now I get to play the game.”
“It was definitely a good experience at Millersville,” says Willard. “I can’t speak enough about Dr. Hagelgans and how he guided us through his eyes to what he has experienced in Emergency Management. And a lot of things he taught us, like checking egos at the door... and the three C's: communication, coordination, collaboration... All these things (are) helping us out right now.”

Back in Millersville, Hagelgans and Millersville’s Incident Management Team have been meeting daily since the start of the pandemic and continues to gather in order to make plans for the next phase of reopening. Millersville has no plans to mandate that students receive the vaccine. According to Hagelgans, because the vaccine was approved through an emergency order, meaning that testing and approval was done during a compressed amount of time in order to address the mounting health crisis, it cannot be mandated.

“We can’t mandate it, but we can strongly encourage everybody and anybody (to get the vaccine). The message we are trying to get out is that anyone that can get a vaccination should get a vaccination, including students,” says Hagelgans. “The more people we have vaccinated, just the better peace of mind for all of us in order to come back to school. We are planning to come back and open fully in the fall.”

As Pennsylvania begins to move towards a full reopening, Millersville’s Incident Management Team has started making plans for what the summer will hold for the University campus. Hagelgans says the team is evaluating if there will be programs and events offered on campus during the summer break. There will also be a team put in place during the summer to make plans for Millersville’s fall reopening.

“I’ve worked a lot of major disasters. I’ve worked disasters that have gone days, probably even into weeks, but certainly never anything that’s gone over a year. Unfortunately, a lot of people have lost their lives, lost their jobs, but you know we are a resilient nation and we will get through this.”
For many educators, 2020 will be remembered as a strange year in their teaching careers. For new teachers and education majors waiting to start their careers, pandemic-protected classrooms are all they know.

After nearly a year since school shutdowns and distance-learning began, Millersville education majors and recent graduates continue to experiment with new teaching methods adjusted to this strange learning environment.

Millersville has historically been known as a teaching school and its education programs are central to its identity. Recently, Study.com ranked Millersville’s early education program in the top 50 programs of its kind in the country.

“Millersville does a really good job with their writing and education programs,” Millersville graduate and substitute teacher Alex Duong says. “The program really made me feel comfortable in a teaching position. The program also establishes expectations and gives a lot of field experience.”

Despite the program’s credentials, the initial wave of shutdowns led to troubles for Millersville student-educators.

“Way back in March, there was no contingency plan for this,” senior secondary education and psychology dual major Alyx Matchett says. “Then we had the Spring Break and then Millersville was out of session. Then [Millersville] put it on the schools to decide whether or not they would host student teachers. Some schools put them aside because they needed to prioritize the students and not the student teachers, and I get that.”

Over the year of altered learning, one of the biggest challenges has been monitoring safety procedures while also properly communicating with students.

In fact, data collected by UNICEF reveals that in 2020, around 463 million students globally lacked the resources to participate in online learning. To ensure students gain proper resources, many schools use in-person classes with limited capacity. The mix of teaching styles can lead to troubles in planning lessons for both in-person and online formats.
“The kids have been good at adapting so far,” Duong says.
A common critique against online learning is the lack of hands-on instruction, particularly when learning in the arts department. For example, difficulties in remote musical lessons arise from the inability to guide learners on their instruments.

“Last March has been the first time we’ve taught instrumental lessons fully online,” Millersville senior and music education major Connor Buckley says. “You’re limited in your toolset as an educator. It’s harder to show them [students] what to do. If they’re having trouble, you can’t reach through the screen and show [students] that their fingers are on the wrong part of the instrument.”

Buckley says teaching music groups with individual students of rotating attendance is especially challenging. There is inconsistency and in some cases a student may even miss a lesson on a specific instrument.

“If a kid’s in both choir and orchestra, you see them once a week. If they’re in science and also choir and orchestra, you see them every two weeks,” Buckey says. “You get a completely varying instrumentation everyday.”

While there are issues with socially-distanced learning, there is also a silver lining. Millersville educators gained new abilities that will carry beyond the pandemic.

“The skills we develop in this age are going to be useful tools in the future,” Matchett says. “We are learning to engage kids in virtual learning, which is a harder way to engage kids than in-person. Even if student teachers are having trouble engaging students right now, don’t give up.”

Buckley has a similar mindset.

“When you remove some tools, others are improved,” he says. “Online learning is here to stay. It will still be utilized in the future.”

The persistence of Millersville student educators will seemingly be rewarded in the near future. In 2019, Business Insider reported Pennsylvania has the second highest earnings for teachers in America, as seen in data from finance website WalletHub.

Along with relatively decent salaries in comparison to other states, Pennsylvania educators’ dedication to teaching in an unusual time not only encourages a high work ethic, but may also lead to higher appreciation for education from both teachers and students alike.

“For me, education has always been about getting back into community,” Duong says. “I do love learning and, in a way, creating content for people that’s helpful and helps students see where opportunities lie. When I go into school and see kids smiling and I notice how their day is going, that’s so important to me.”

Despite bizarre class structures, Duong continues to foster creativity in the classroom through hands-on projects.
PHOTO COURTESY OF ALEX DUONG

Matchett’s desk is still lined with tools to teach their students.
PHOTO COURTESY OF ALYX MATCHETT

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID FROM NUCLEI PROJECT
COVID-19 pandemic staggers growth of elementary school learners

College students have faced some unique challenges this year with online learning, but there are young learners who have had an even harder time in this mostly digital school year.

With the distance barriers of the COVID-19 pandemic, many elementary school level learners are not learning life, education, and social skills. Experienced educators have adapted to pandemic restrictions, aiding students in gaining foundational abilities and student teachers are learning from this experience.

“It’s definitely been the hardest year I’ve ever had,” third-grade English-language arts teacher Julie Vail says. “It’s been very stressful outside of school. There’s been a lot of communicating with kids outside of school, along with working late into the school day.”

Elementary school is considered a turning point in the development of young learners. Third grade specifically is when students are to gain more independence as learners and learn critical thinking strategies, according to Scholastic.

Unfortunately, 2020 was a year of stunted growth for many. Research conducted by Meghan Kuhfeld and Beth Tarasawa of the nonprofit Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) predicted that when third through eighth graders returned to school for the Fall 2020 school year, there would be less than 50% retention of math content and 70% of reading content.

Fortunately, after a year of adjustment, early educators are regaining control of how students learn.

“2021 has certainly been easier than 2020, especially from a tech standpoint,” second grade teacher Deborah Wirth says. “It is a lot of work, as we’re teaching pupils at home, as well as in schools. But it’s a lot of fun learning how to integrate this new tech into lessons.”

Vail and Wirth are educators at North Sale Elementary School. Throughout the pandemic, the school has experimented with...
different structures of student attendance throughout the day.

As with other elementary schools, North Salem students are given options of how much in-person instruction they receive based on factors such as at-home resources and concern for the child getting sick.

“While the schedules are similar, as all my kids attend in-person, the methods of how we learn are very different,” Vail says. “I am a big fan of cooperation in learning, which unfortunately isn’t as possible with online learning.”

Resource management is another issue with social distance learning. While many of the physical learning tools are present, items such as counting squares must be sanitized and quarantined after a child uses them.

Rather than using hands-on materials, many classes shifted focus onto tech devices. Excessive screen time is an issue, both in schools and at-home, that has been amplified by the pandemic. Even pre-pandemic in 2019, non-profit organization Common Sense reported that children ages eight to twelve were viewing screens for nearly five hours daily. The use of screens for schooltime has only made this worse.

“Their iPads have become their main source of instruction,” Vail says. “Yes, you can play educational games online, but you don’t want them sitting on their iPads a lot. You have to balance the time.”

A common gripe of online learning is the inability to do hands-on skill practice, especially in courses such as gym and music. There are other hidden difficulties in courses such as language arts.

“It can be very difficult to understand what the kids are saying when they wear the masks,” Wirth says. “I have to lean in and ask them to repeat themselves. It’s very hard to teach kids language skills when you can’t hear them well or even see their mouths move.”

Fortunately, students are overcoming the barriers of socially distanced learning. Not only are Vail’s in-school students able to socialize, including masked recess breaks, but Wirth’s online classes are still forming bonds.

“We are still able to have discussions together over Zoom,” Wirth says. “The kids absolutely love the breakout rooms. It’s great we can form a strong classroom community without necessarily being in the classroom.”

The high spirits and positivity of both students and educators will carry schools through these bizarre times. In fact, using online learning now helps find ways to use tech tools post-pandemic.

“The good thing about online work is that kids can still access the work even when they can’t be in class,” Vail says. “And you get what you give. I could see a really motivated student thriving with the online structure. Overall, the kids are trying their best and they do love to be in school.”

2021 marks the final year in Wirth’s teaching career. As she leaves, she wishes future educators the best of luck and hopes they remain positive.

“People always say they’re sorry that my last year in teaching was during a pandemic. But honestly, I’ve loved the challenge of learning to engage kids this way,” Wirth says. “Always be willing to try and learn new things to teach your kids. Also, don’t be afraid to learn from them, as well. As I’ve learned during the pandemic, some of them may know more about this tech than I do.”

COVID-19 precautions are being taken in North Salem Elementary to protect both students and faculty.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DEBORAH WIRTH
Covid precautions taken

MU sign informs students how to properly wear masks around campus in front of the Fulton House.

COVID-19 guidelines are placed in the Galley eating hall to instruct students how to dine safely.

Photos Courtesy of Carly O’Neill
around Millersville's campus

The McNairy Library reminds students to social distance while studying.

Millersville’s Student Memorial Center implements sanitation stations around campus to prevent the transmission of the coronavirus.
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