

Muhlenberg

Magazine

SUMMER 2020

A Stark Reality

How the COVID-19 pandemic upended the spring semester

Election Issues Guide

Be an informed voter with insights from faculty experts

Leadership News

The board names Kathleen E. Harring Muhlenberg's 13th president

A Time to Act

The College is committed to building an anti-racist community

WE ASKED, YOU ANSWERED

Our students needed help.
You rallied to provide everything
from travel home to medication to
technology for remote learning.

*“I just wanted to thank you all again
for your help in getting me back on
track for classes. The new laptop
arrived today! This final semester
has been quite the roller coaster
ride but having a supportive
community like you all has
made it more tolerable.”*

—STUDENT, CLASS OF 2020

THE EMERGENCY GRANT FUND

muhlenberg.edu/emergencyfund

Direct relief for specific student financial hardship.
Loss of employment and health insurance still pose challenges for our students.

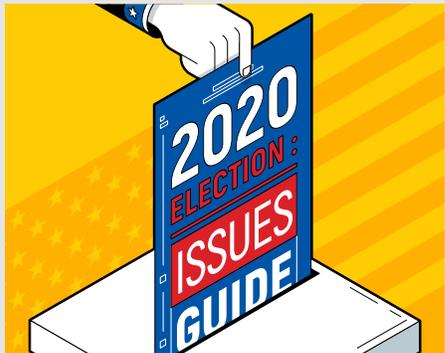
AND YOU CAN STILL HELP.

Mules *a/ways* come together to answer the call.

On behalf of every student in need, thank you.



FEATURES



The COVID Chronicles

In March, a rapidly evolving global crisis arrived on the College's doorstep. Learn how Muhlenberg responded and how the community continues to exhibit resilience as the pandemic wears on.

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2020 Election: Issues Guide

Faculty experts offer their insights on key topics voters should know about to inform their choices this November.

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ON THE COVER Photographer Paul Pearson captured Muhlenberg's eerily empty campus during a shoot this spring after most students had returned home due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

From the Editor



I used to work as an editor at a running publication. In one brainstorming session, female staffers swapped stories of being catcalled or followed during runs. One man in the room couldn't contain his shock. He said something like, "I run with women all the time, and I've never seen that happen!" It was the moment he realized that his lived experience was vastly different simply because he was a man.

In early May, many white runners experienced a major awakening to their privilege when a video surfaced of Ahmaud Arbery, a Black runner in Georgia, being shot to death midrun by white vigilantes who'd chased him in a truck. By the end of the month, the video of the death of George Floyd in police custody created a reckoning for a much broader swath of white Americans. While this video was unfortunately far from the first showing a Black American dying at the hands of police, it inspired protests and calls to action more widespread and ongoing than previous killings did.

Emanuela Kucik, assistant professor of English and Africana studies and co-director of the Africana studies program, has theories about why this moment feels different. It coincides with the COVID-19 pandemic, which has disproportionately affected communities of color. And more people have been home, glued to the news and social media, which made the Floyd video more likely to be seen. "I think because so many people paid attention to the Floyd case from the outset, they became invested in it, and they've now started learning more in general and are committed to unraveling this entire system," she says.

Kucik is among seven Black faculty members who co-authored a letter and action plan to the Muhlenberg community in early June (see page 10 for more information). On page 28, President Kathleen E. Harring and Board Chair Richard C. Crist Jr. '77 P'05 P'09 explore how the College is meeting—and how we all might meet—this long-overdue moment. Kucik is also a contributor to the "2020 Election: Issues Guide" (page 48), which brings in faculty experts to explore key topics including racial justice, health care and climate change.

As the College prepares to welcome students back next month (see page 6 to learn more about its fall plans), "The COVID Chronicles," page 30, provides an in-depth look at how the pandemic has affected, and continues to affect, the Muhlenberg community. Over 18 pages, we unpack when and how decisions were made, starting with the first unplanned campus closure in the College's 171-year history, and how students, alumni, faculty and staff have responded.

Meghan Kita
Managing Editor

Magazine Staff

Meghan Kita
Managing Editor

Bill Keller
Editor

Brian Speer
Executive Editor

Chris Borick, Chrysan Cronin, Yariv Fadlon, Jeremy Fuchs '14, Kathleen E. Harring, Heather Mayer Irvine, April Johnston, Emanuela Kucik, Cindy Kuzma, Susan Falciani Maldonado, Rich Niesenbaum, Ranajoy Ray-Chaudhuri, Art Raymond, A.C. Shilton, Scott Snyder, Lufei Teng, Kristine Yahna Todaro '84, Sara Vigneri
Contributing Writers

Brooke Porcelli
Design and Art Direction

Tom Amico, Joshua Fernandez, Bill Keller, Paul Pearson, Jon Schlegel, Brooke Slezak
Contributing Photographers

Chris Gash, David Plunkert, Charlie Powell, blindSALIDA/Rappart
Contributing Illustrators

Administration

Kathleen E. Harring, *president*
Rebekkah L. Brown '99, *vice president for advancement*
Brian Speer, *vice president for communications*
Natalie Kulp Hand '78 P'07, *assistant vice president for alumni affairs and career services*

Contact

Managing Editor, *Muhlenberg Magazine*
2400 Chew Street, Allentown, PA 18104-5564
magazine@muhlenberg.edu
484-664-3230

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An Engaging Story

I was inspired by Nick Daza's story ("Personally Speaking...") in the Spring 2020 issue. I'm proud of Muhlenberg students like Nick who engage with local organizations as a catalyst for change. Also, as we learned from Nick's interview, his experience at Muhlenberg and in Allentown changed what he thought he wanted to do. Personally, I would not be where I am today if it were not for the community engagement and internship opportunities I had in downtown Allentown.

Mitch Hanna '14

Of Mules and Memories



I am an "old" Muhlenberg graduate (Class of 1969) and a former cheerleader. My best friend, Susan Toth Ahrens '70 (pictured, left), was the person who restored the Mule mascot from a few years of retirement in 1967. What fun it was to read the testimonial of another substitute ("Inside Marti's Head," Spring 2020) affirming Susie's tribulations.

Also, having participated in the dink tradition in 1965, I enjoyed that memory, too ("Mixed Dinks," Fall 2019). Our class timing was unique. In four short years, we spanned the *Leave It To Beaver* era—with curfews, locked dorms, housemothers and no slacks/jeans as freshmen—that dramatically transitioned to a *Forrest Gump* environment by senior year—with war protests, no rules and, of course, bell-bottom jeans!

Judith Fries Cawley '69

"Inside Marti's Head" (Spring 2020) inspired several former mascots to share their memories on the Muhlenberg College Alumni (@MuhlenbergAlum) Facebook page:



"President [Arthur] Taylor and me at a football game, probably 1994."
—*Kristine M. Young '96*

"The smell description ["like a towel you left in the washing machine just a little bit too long before you remembered to transfer it to the dryer"] is accurate, but it's some of the most fun I ever had!" —*Randi Schweriner '87*

"My favorite memory was during a basketball game. I was so hot, I thought it would be a good idea to go outside in the freezing temps. When I hit the outdoors, the steam came off my body so much it filled the head and I couldn't see anything to get back inside. I lost my bearings and couldn't get the head off by myself and I was stuck outside until someone helped me."
—*Debbie Scurnick Block '86*

Share your thoughts about stories in the magazine.
Email your letters to magazine@muhlenberg.edu.

ONLINE STORIES NOT TO MISS

Check out these features on the Muhlenberg website.

Forging Cross-Campus Connections

Two sites Muhlenberg students visited on the Office of Multicultural Life's second cultural immersion alternative spring break were the historically Black Howard (pictured at right) and Morgan State Universities. Robin Riley-Casey, Muhlenberg's director of multicultural life, and Kiyaana Cox Jones, assistant director of multicultural life and a 2008 Howard graduate, organized the trip and accompanied 11 students to stops in Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. To learn more about their experience, visit muhlenberg.edu/immersion2020.

Two Hours of History

Allison Kaye '21, a political science major with a minor in women's & gender studies, had the opportunity to sit in on the impeachment trial in January as an intern in New Jersey Senator Cory Booker's office. To read her reflection on the experience, visit muhlenberg.edu/senateintern.



PHOTO BY JOSHUA FERNANDEZ

Muhlenberg Extended Learning Program Offers Free Summer Study

Faculty, staff and donors came together to enable the College to offer 100 incoming students and 100 returning students the opportunity to apply for a grant to pay for one online course.

The idea that would become the Muhlenberg Extended Learning (MXL) Program began in the Office of Admissions, before the COVID-19 pandemic upended normal life. The admissions team saw in summer learning an opportunity for incoming students to connect with the College earlier than they typically do. Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Melissa Falk '92 recalls early conversations about the logistics of launching such a program with the School of Continuing Studies team taking place in February.

“Prior to COVID, [MXL] was related to engaging students and solidifying the connection to the College. Building relationships with faculty and peers in a class is one way for students to connect and identify as Muhlenberg students,” Falk says. In the current situation, MXL allows incoming students to feel “a sense of progress. They don’t have these milestone rites of passage—graduation, prom—that mark, ‘I’m moving on to the next step.’ Taking a college class for a lot of these students means, ‘I’m moving forward.’”

When COVID-19 hit, it became important to Falk and others to ensure the MXL opportunity would be extended to returning students as well, specifically to those directly affected by the pandemic. The idea became to offer 100 incoming students and 100 returning students an online summer course free of charge, the first of several Red Door Initiatives (see sidebar at right) the College has rolled out to support students during this difficult time. Once the MXL concept was solidified, the question became how to pay for it.

Vice President for Advancement Rebekkah Brown '99 remembers getting a call from Vice President for Enrollment Management Rob Springall asking if her team could find funding—\$100,000—for the program. Within 10 days, the Office of Advancement had raised the money by approaching leadership-level donors, many of whom were able to commit to gifts at the \$5,000 level or higher.

These donors were interested in MXL because it works toward the dual goals of enrollment and retention, Brown



says, and because the program directly supports students: “It was eye-opening for some donors what our students face in terms of financial challenges, and hearing stories about what the impact has been as students left for home has really moved people to want to help.”

For Incoming Students, an Introduction to the College

Incoming students interested in MXL applied through the Office of Admissions and received a curated list of about two dozen courses they could choose from. These courses were selected based on their appropriateness for first-year students as well as who would be teaching them—to ensure the best possible experience, only faculty who’ve been through the semester-long digital learning training and who’ve taught online in the past are teaching incoming students

this summer. Some faculty who weren't planning to teach this summer signed on to do it in order to support MXL. Incoming students could also opt to take the required Foundations for Student Success course (which goes over things like study skills and office hours) during the summer. The admissions team received 205 applications, Falk says.

The next step was for students to sign up for a 30-minute Zoom advising session with Falk, Senior Associate Director of Admissions/Director of Multicultural Recruitment Cindy Amaya Santiago '01 or Senior Assistant Director of Admissions/Coordinator of Transfer Admissions Eric Thompson '10. These conversations reinforced that these summer courses are for students intending to begin at Muhlenberg this fall (not to defer) and that they're a commitment—students will receive a grade that will appear on their transcripts. Prior to the start of the Summer I session, Falk, Amaya Santiago and Thompson each did three hours of appointments daily for seven workdays.

Some students opted not to enroll in a course after their advising session, while others went ahead. There are 45 incoming students taking a Summer I course with more registered for subsequent sessions; all available spots for incoming students were filled by mid-June.

"I really believe those [advising] conversations reaffirm for those students that they're coming to Muhlenberg," Falk says. "This is another step in the direction towards college, as opposed to treading water."

For Returning Students, a Show of Community Support

Interim Dean of Academic Life Michele Deegan and her team were responsible for fielding applications for returning students interested in free summer study. Applicants needed to demonstrate that they'd been immediately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, that they had significant financial need or that they'd fallen behind with coursework as they moved home and had to adjust their course load. "There were many students who came forward with need, making it difficult to select students who would receive the grant," Deegan says.

For example, one student dropped a spring class because they had to work full-time after both parents lost their jobs. Another student had to go out of state to serve as the primary caregiver for a relative. Some students had immediate family members with COVID-19 or had the virus themselves.

Deegan's inbox has filled with messages of appreciation from selected students, a heartwarming reminder of what Muhlenberg is all about: "Offering these opportunities for students is a no-brainer. That's just who Muhlenberg is. That's why our students love being here, and why faculty and staff love being a part of this community," she says. "This program gives students, faculty and staff a chance to have some semblance of the Muhlenberg community over the summer." —*Meghan Kita*

Red Door Initiatives

Other ways the College is supporting students through COVID-19

Student Employee Pay Program

During the College's move to remote learning and work, many students were not able to work the expected number of hours in their student employee positions. Muhlenberg sent a special paycheck to students in hourly positions who either couldn't work remotely or lost hours due to the change, effectively paying them for the time they lost.

Emergency Grant Fund

This fund was established last summer by the Office of the Dean of Students, fortified in January by a reallocation of a longstanding student-fee surplus and bolstered further by more than \$70,000 in donations received since the pandemic began. It has paid for a number of immediate and longer-term student needs related to COVID-19, including transportation, home access to technology and/or internet and personal needs due to financial hardship (for things like medication, groceries and/or personal care items).

Muhlenberg College Professional Development Internship

This innovative summer program provides 10 weeks of financial support for current Muhlenberg students while offering students a professional development curriculum and structured experiential opportunities. The goal of this program is to assist students in obtaining professional skills and experiences necessary for future employment or academic pursuits.

To learn more, visit muhlenberg.edu/assist.

Kathleen E. Harring Named 13th President of Muhlenberg College



The Muhlenberg College Board of Trustees unanimously elected Kathleen E. Harring as the next president of the College, which Board Chair Richard C. Crist Jr. '77 P'05 P'09 announced to the College community on June 26. Harring, who had been serving as interim president since June 2019, is the first woman to hold the position.

"Kathy Harring is truly the right woman at the right time to lead our great institution," Crist said. "She has the wisdom, experience and energy to guide the

College through these challenging times and into a bright future. When Dr. Harring was named interim president a year ago, none of us could have imagined what the next 12 months would hold. Kathy's performance in real time during unprecedented condi-

tions made it clear to the board that Kathy was the best possible candidate to lead Muhlenberg College."

Harring expressed her commitment to Muhlenberg and added, "While these past months have not been normal by any means, the strength of our College emerged in so many ways. I am excited to take on the challenges and opportunities of this position, to lead with mind and heart and to work with our community to move our institution forward."

As co-chair of Muhlenberg's 2017 strategic planning process, Harring has continued to advance the College's strategic plan. Efforts include the announcement of the new Muhlenberg College School of Graduate Studies programs in February as well as the continued expansion of the Muhlenberg College School of Continuing Studies.

A member of the Muhlenberg College faculty since 1984, Harring also served as the College's provost. During her tenure as provost, Harring was instrumental in guiding a number of important initiatives, including implementing procedures to support the College's diversity initiatives and overseeing development of the integrative learning curriculum. —*Kristine Yahna Todaro '84*

Fall Semester on Campus to Begin and End Early Amid Pandemic

On June 24, Muhlenberg notified students and families of its plans for the fall semester. Students will be invited to return to campus to start the semester a week earlier than previously planned, on Monday, August 24, and in-person instruction will conclude on Friday, November 20. The final week of the semester as well as finals week will be conducted virtually. There will be no fall break in order to minimize the risks inherent with travel. Students who are unable or unwilling to return to campus will be offered the option to continue learning virtually.

In order to protect the health of the campus community, masks will be required for students, faculty and staff in all indoor spaces (except inside a student's own residence); classrooms will be filled to no more than half capacity to allow for proper social distancing; and various infrastructure updates (touchless sinks, plexiglass

barriers, distancing markings on floors) will be made. Testing, contact tracing and screening protocols for students, faculty and staff will be in place as well.

The College collaborated with groups including the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Allentown Health Bureau and Lehigh Valley Health Network in creating its plan for the fall, which will be made publicly available in its entirety before the semester begins.

"As we return to campus, each one of us needs to take responsibility for our actions to support the health, safety and well-being of our community," President Kathleen E. Harring wrote in the message announcing the decision. "Together, we can navigate the necessary changes on our campus with resilience and generosity."

For further information, visit muhlenberg.edu/covid updates. —*MK*

Carnegie Foundation Recognizes Muhlenberg for Community Engagement

Muhlenberg is one of only 119 colleges and universities nationwide to receive the 2020 Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, an elective designation that indicates institutional commitment to community engagement from The Carnegie Foundation.

The Carnegie classification is awarded following a process of self-study by each institution, which is then assessed by a national review committee led by the Swearer Center for Public Engagement at Brown University, the administrative and research home for the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.

Muhlenberg's commitment to community engagement is aligned with its commitment to diversity and inclusion and rooted in the concepts of equity and justice. The College, which initially received the Carnegie Classification in 2010, was also reclassified in 2015.

“The civic good higher education institutions do, particularly through community engagement work, is vital. Collaborating with our Allentown partners while enhancing our teaching and research to build stronger communities is central to Muhlenberg’s mission.”

—PRESIDENT KATHLEEN E. HARRING

“The civic good higher education institutions do, particularly through community engagement work, is vital,” says President Kathleen E. Harring. “Collaborating with our Allentown partners while enhancing our teaching and research to build stronger communities is central to Muhlenberg’s mission.”

With 119 institutions classified or reclassified in the 2020 cycle, there are now a total of 359 institutions nationally who are active holders of the Carnegie designation.

“Recognizing and leveraging strengths within all of our communities to work toward common goals creates space for change to occur,” says Beth Halpern, Muhlenberg’s director of community engagement. “Community-engaged faculty scholarship, including publications, research and course-based collaborations, in addition to student-led weekly programs, build relationships among individuals and communities, creating positive, inclusive spaces where we can all thrive.” —KYT

The long-term partnership between Muhlenberg College and Allentown’s Jefferson Elementary School includes Jefferson Field Day, held on campus in May, and weekly visits from Muhlenberg students to assist with after-school programs.



Lecturer Roberta Meek Honored as Her Phased Retirement Begins



Lecturer of Media & Communication and Africana Studies Roberta Meek (left) receives the Toni Morrison Award from Emanuela Kucik, assistant professor of English and Africana studies and co-director of Africana studies.

In February, students, faculty, staff and community members gathered in the Seegers Union Event Space for a Celebration of Black Excellence Through the Ages. Roberta Meek '06 P'14 GP'20, a lecturer of media & communication and Africana studies in the first year of a phased retirement, was among those being celebrated, though she didn't yet know how.

Emanuela Kucik, assistant professor of English and Africana studies and co-director of Africana studies, presented Meek with the Toni Morrison Award to honor Meek's "commitment to academic enrichment and leading in excellence for justice, equity and inclusion," Kucik said. In her speech, Kucik recounted spending time with Meek during her first visit to campus: In the Wood Dining Commons, student after student approached Meek to catch up. It was clear Meek had gotten to know them on a deep level and that the students valued this connection.

"In that moment, I knew that I wanted to know Professor Roberta Meek and learn how to be the type of educator students trust with not only their education, but also the more difficult details of their worlds," Kucik said.

After Meek accepted the award, Director of Multicultural Life Robin Riley-Casey announced the creation of the Roberta Meek Office of Multicultural Life Scholarship.*

"When Emanuela read her speech, I can't tell you how much that meant to me," Meek says. "I was a little sobby at the table. When Robin announced they were doing a scholarship, I was absolutely speechless."

Meek's history with Muhlenberg began long before she started teaching in 2009. She took her first class at the College in 1980 to work toward finishing a degree she'd started at Yale University, but life kept interrupting. In 2004, Meek returned to the School of Continuing Education (then the Wescoe School) with a plan to finish. In 2006, she received a bachelor's degree in history.

Meanwhile, Meek's consulting work introduced her to Professor and then-Chair of Media

& Communication Lora Taub—both were involved with a youth leadership program called HYPE that connected high school students to Muhlenberg students and faculty. Meek's teaching style and experience as a historian of the civil rights movement impacted Taub. When Taub needed someone to teach Race and Representation in the summer of 2009, she asked Meek. Within a few years, Meek became a full-time lecturer, split between media & communication and history, and in 2014, she became director of Africana studies.

"I've been there through battling the institution, but know that I absolutely love this institution. This is home."

—ROBERTA MEEK '06 P'14 GP'20

Outside the classroom, Meek served as advisor for the Black Students Association when students of color from several affinity groups came together in a coalition they called the Diversity Vanguard. In the spring of 2013, the group called for the creation of a diversity strategic plan. Within two years, the College had one.

"That was their baby, but I helped with thinking about how to be strategic about your ask, how you ask—those kinds of things," Meek says.

Meek also was faculty mentor and first-year seminar instructor for the Emerging Leaders Classes of 2019, 2020 and 2021. One reason Meek chose a phased retirement—teaching one class per semester over three years—was so she could see her last Emerging Leaders cohort graduate.

Two of Meek's grandchildren are young (ages 2 and 4), and she intends to help more with their care as her role at the College becomes less demanding. But even in retirement, Muhlenberg will hold a special place in her heart.

"I've been there through battling the institution, but know that I absolutely love this institution," Meek says. "This is home." —MK

*Riley-Casey and Meek are now discussing the criteria students must meet to qualify. Gifts toward endowing the Roberta Meek Scholarship can be designated in care of the Office of Multicultural Life.

Five Faculty Members Promoted to Professor

The Board of Trustees, on the recommendation of President Kathleen E. Haring, awarded full professorship to the following five faculty members:



Janine Chi (sociology) has interests including nationalism and identity politics, sociology of development and social change and the sociology of food. Chi earned her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Washington, Seattle, and her B.S. from the University of Iowa.



William Gruen, chair of religion studies, is researching how ancient Christianities are misremembered and misinterpreted in source texts from antiquity. Gruen received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, his M.A. from the University of Cincinnati and his B.A. from the University of Kentucky.



Margo Hobbs, chair of art, is motivated by helping students think about the relationship between art and its history. Her research focuses on feminist art of the 1970s and '80s. Hobbs earned her Ph.D. from Northwestern University, her M.A. from School of the Art Institute of Chicago and her B.A. from St. John's College.



Roland Kushner (business) teaches management practices and decision-making in various enterprise settings. His scholarship focuses on the economics and management of arts and culture and strategic management in nonprofit organizations. He received his Ph.D. and M.B.A. from Lehigh University and his B.A. from Carleton University.



Katherine Richmond '00 (psychology) teaches courses that unite psychology, women & gender studies, mental health and social justice. Her interests include multicultural psychology and gender ideology. Richmond earned her Ph.D. from Nova Southeastern University and her B.A. from Muhlenberg College. —KYT

José Dieudonné Appointed Chief Information Officer



Dieudonné began his appointment as a member of the president's cabinet on March 23. He previously served as the associate vice president for technology and library services at

Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. Prior to his work at Wilson, he served as vice president for technology and chief information officer at Point University in West Point, Georgia, and as vice president of library and information technology and chief information officer at Arcadia University in Glenside, Pennsylvania.

Report Shows Progress on College Access, Opportunity Goals

The American Talent Initiative (ATI), of which Muhlenberg College is a member, is on track to enroll 50,000 more lower-income students by 2025. The latest report from ATI, a nationwide consortium of colleges and universities committed to expanding higher education access for low- and moderate-income students, notes significant progress towards the enrollment goals set forth in 2016. Muhlenberg and the other members of the national alliance have taken leadership roles in the enrollment of nearly 21,000 new Pell-grant eligible students between the 2015–2016 and 2017–2018 academic years. ATI members are responsible for a disproportionate increase in the number of total enrolled students who qualify for federal Pell grants, which provide need-based grants to low-income college students.

Kyra Hickey '21 Honored as a Newman Civic Fellow

Kyra Hickey '21 has been named a 2020-2021 Newman Civic Fellow—one of just 290 nationwide—by Campus Compact, a Boston-based nonprofit organization working to advance the public purposes of higher education. The Newman Civic Fellowship is a yearlong program for students from Campus Compact member institutions. Students selected for the fellowship are campus leaders who demonstrate a commitment to finding solutions for challenges facing communities locally, nationally and internationally.

A dance and Italian double major and women's & gender studies minor, Hickey was nominated by President Kathleen E. Haring on the basis of her potential for public leadership.

In her statement for the fellowship, Hickey wrote, "I believe in the transformative force of movement. Whether it's dance, sports, yoga or simply walking, movement enhances our inter- and intrapersonal connections. Access to regular physical activity and movement practice drives my work in the community ... Nurturing young people and their wellness is a responsibility and a public priority if we hope for a brighter, more inclusive future."

During the course of the fellowship, Campus Compact provides the students with a variety of learning and networking opportunities that emphasize personal, professional and civic growth. Each year, fellows are invited to a national conference of Newman Civic Fellows and participate in numerous virtual training and networking opportunities. The fellowship also provides recipients with pathways to apply for exclusive scholarship and post-graduate opportunities. —*KYT*



Black Faculty Call Upon the College Community to Act

On June 9, seven Black faculty members distributed a letter and action plan to the Muhlenberg community in the wake of protests of racial injustice across the country. The document expresses support for the Black Lives Matter movement and for Black students, faculty and staff and puts forth "active steps that Muhlenberg can take to become an anti-racist, genuinely inclusive institution that every single member of the community can safely and joyfully call home."

The plan includes calls to action in seven areas: recruitment and retention of Black students and students of color; hiring and retention of Black faculty and faculty of color; institutional leadership and capacity in diversity, equity and inclusion; support for and expansion of the Africana studies program; initiatives that support Black students and students of color; curricular change and extracurricular event support; and local and national support. As of early July, 366 faculty

and staff had co-signed the letter in solidarity.

In the week following the letter's distribution, the faculty who co-authored the letter discussed the action plan as well as other potential action items with senior staff. On June 16, President Kathleen E. Haring shared the actions being taken immediately in response to those meetings, including increasing funding and resources for the Office of Multicultural Life and the Emerging Leaders program; approving the hires of two tenure-track faculty positions with joint appointments in Africana studies; and broadening the scope of the Presidential Diversity Innovation Grants to provide additional funds specifically targeted for anti-racist programs.

To read the letter from the faculty in its entirety and to find the latest updates on action items, visit muhlenberg.edu/blacklivesmatter. —*MK*

Dorothy Hess Baker: Life Trustee, Generous Supporter of the Performing Arts

Community philanthropist Dorothy Hess Baker, formerly of Allentown, Pennsylvania, died June 14, 2020, at the age of 92. Dorothy and her late husband, Dexter F. Baker, were generous supporters of the performing arts at Muhlenberg, where she was a longtime trustee and recipient of an honorary doctorate in arts and sciences.

The Bakers' legacy at Muhlenberg is of inestimable importance and goes back decades. It includes the Dorothy & Dexter Baker Center for the Arts; the Dorothy Hess Baker Theatre; the Baker Artist-in-Residence series, bringing world-class performance artists to campus since 1992; and the Baker Scholar program, which has helped more than 100 performing arts students attend Muhlenberg over the past 40 years.

Dorothy was an enthusiastic patron, both at Muhlenberg and throughout the Lehigh Valley, as well as a musician in her own right. She graduated from Syracuse University in 1949 with a degree in vocal music, and she sang with the Bach Choir of Bethlehem and other Lehigh Valley choral groups.

Dorothy moved to Allentown in 1967 with her husband, Dexter Baker, a former CEO of Air Products. Here, they immersed themselves and their four daughters in the Lehigh Valley cultural community and, in 1986, founded the Dexter F. & Dorothy H. Baker Foundation. Among numerous awards the Bakers received for philanthropy were the 1995 Arts Ovation Award from the Allentown Arts Commission and the 2001 Patron Award from the Pennsylvania Governor's Awards for the Arts. The Bakers moved to Florida in 2010.

Dorothy was among the first female members of Muhlenberg's Board of Trustees in 1974. Upon her retirement from the board in 1997, she was bestowed the honor of life trustee.

"Dorothy's support for the arts in the Lehigh Valley has had a profound effect on the cultural life of the region," says Professor of Theatre Charles Richter, who founded Muhlenberg's theatre program in 1978. "Certainly, we wouldn't be

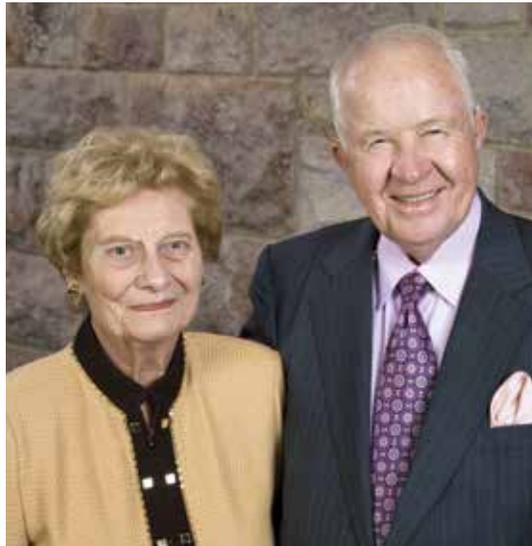
where we are without her support and the support of the Baker Foundation and family. Dorothy was a devoted patron of our performances, and

"Dorothy was a devoted patron of our performances, and I'll always be grateful for the personal connections she made with our students and staff. The spaces on campus that bear her name stand as monuments to her deep and lasting commitment to the power of performance."

—PROFESSOR OF THEATRE CHARLES RICHTER

I'll always be grateful for the personal connections she made with our students and staff. The spaces on campus that bear her name stand as monuments to her deep and lasting commitment to the power of performance."

Dorothy is survived by her sister, four daughters (Carolyn J. Baker, Leslie Boris, Ellen Ghelardi and Susan Baker Royal), six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. —*Scott Snyder*



Dorothy Hess Baker and Dexter F. Baker in 2007

Crisis Communication

Assistant Professor and Director of Public Health Chrysan Cronin takes her expertise beyond the classroom during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 12 seniors taking Infectious Disease Epidemiology this spring weren't required to attend the weekly videoconference class meetings set up when coursework went remote due to COVID-19. But Chrysan Cronin, assistant professor and director of public health, says they all showed up routinely anyway—as did many of the 11 students who'd taken the course last fall.

"I don't have students saying, 'Why do I have to learn this? It's never going to happen,'" she says.

While these students were already invested in public health, the appetite for information about infectious disease has never been greater. Cronin spent the first half of the year fielding interview requests from journalists, trying to communicate what science tells us—and what scientists don't yet know—about this new-to-humans virus. Cronin, who has a doctorate from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, sees this as an opportunity to expand her role as an educator.

"I'm being able to use a different skill set than I use in the classroom," she says. "It's about how to practice public health instead of how to teach it."

Cronin has been a key player in the College's public health program since its inception. In 2004, the then dean of academic life identified the potential of adding such a program at the undergraduate level. Cronin, who was teaching biology at the time, was part of a faculty task force to design a public health minor, which debuted in the 2006-2007 academic year.

That's also when Cronin returned to school to pursue a master's in public health (she already had one in microbiology) from Johns Hopkins, one of the top-ranked public health schools in the world. She completed her master's and doctorate while continuing to teach full-time at Muhlenberg, making the three-hour drive to Baltimore at least twice a week for six years.

As a doctoral student, Cronin was most interested in infectious disease research, but living far from Johns Hopkins labs would make that logistically challenging. A mentor helped steer her toward research on radon, a radioactive gas that can cause lung disease when inhaled at high concentrations over long periods of time. Pennsylvania's buildings have some of the highest radon levels in the world. Cronin found an entry point when she noticed a wide variety in radon testing rates across Allentown.

"When I looked at testing rates by zip code, there were some zip codes in Allentown that had much higher testing rates for residential radon than other zip codes," she says. "My questions were: Why? What is it about some of these areas where people aren't testing?"



Assistant Professor and Director of Public Health Chrysan Cronin speaks during a COVID-19 panel in Miller Forum on March 10.

Ads to raise radon awareness ran on the sides of local buses as well as inside bus stops. Public health students (from left) Rashida Haye '20, Brynn Cardonick '21 and Meray Faragalla '20 worked with Cronin on the campaign.

Muhlenberg students helped Cronin survey 550 Allentown residents to gauge how radon awareness, testing and mitigation varied across zip codes, education levels and various other demographic groups. Further research helped Cronin understand that the problem was one of communication and that Allentownians identifying as non-Hispanic were more than twice as likely to have ever heard of radon than those identifying as Hispanic. In 2018, Cronin and students conducted focus groups to better understand where Allentown residents found news and which outlets they trusted most.

Last fall, Cronin organized a radon symposium on Muhlenberg's campus with guests from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the Allentown Health Bureau and the local hospital networks. The idea was to come up with ways to use research to enact change. Some of Cronin's students who attended came up with the idea to advertise about radon's risks within the Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority bus system. The state paid for ads, in both Spanish and English, to run on the outsides and insides of buses and within bus shelters. They read, "Radon causes lung cancer. Test your home. Save your life."

Cronin paused her radon work this spring in order to help with a student-driven program to train Lehigh Valley community members to administer Narcan, a drug that can reverse an opioid overdose. That project is on hold indefinitely—no one is sure when things like in-person training sessions can safely resume.

This time of uncertainty has Cronin thinking about the tabletop exercise on pandemic influenza that her Infectious Disease Epidemiology students would, in a typical semester, spend three or four class sessions working on. They imagine the disease making its way to campus and discuss how it should be handled.

"We end with, 'Should we have graduation or not?' We never get to, 'Well, will we open the following semester?'" she says. "I think I'm going to have to redo that whole course, because we don't work in what-ifs anymore." —MK



"I'm being able to use a different skill set than I use in the classroom. It's about how to practice public health instead of how to teach it."

—CHRYSAN CRONIN

A Constructive Creative Outlet



Not long after Vicki Zandier '23 left campus due to COVID-19, she needed a break from her remote schoolwork. In the basement of her family home in Douglassville, Pennsylvania, she found relics of a simpler time: Lego blocks.

She missed campus, and nothing says “campus” quite like Haas College Center—so that’s what she used the Lego blocks to make. She took a photo of her creation that got lots of love when it was shared on the College’s social media channels. Here, Zandier tells the story of Lego Haas.

Muhlenberg Magazine Did anyone help you with this, and how long did it take?

Vicki Zandier My dad and I worked together to build it. It was the two of us on the ground with my laptop open on a picture of Haas for reference and the TV playing in the background. My mom made the clock face for the bell tower after my dad and I were struggling to figure out how to make it. The whole thing took about three hours.

MM What Lego sets were you using?

VZ I was using my mom’s Legos from when she was a child for the



majority of the building and a Lego Friends set for the middle part. I wanted to put the statue of General Muhlenberg on the College Green, and Indiana Jones was the closest we had.

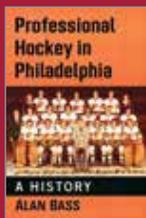
MM What was the toughest part of Haas to capture in Lego?

VZ The clock tower. It took us a long time to figure out how to get the curve. We ended up using two railings and having pieces not completely connect with each other.

MM What are you going to do with the Lego Haas now?

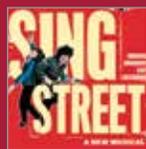
VZ It’s currently on a table in my sunroom. My mom messaged [Dean of Students] Allison Gulati on Instagram about our creation and got a message back that she would love to display it in Haas. It was a complete surprise and made our day.

| NEW RELEASES |



Alan Bass '12
Professional Hockey in Philadelphia: A History
McFarland & Company,
167 pages

Bass, the former manager of Muhlenberg’s ice hockey team, wrote a comprehensive history of the teams and players that graced the ice in Philadelphia from the turn of the 20th century through the 2009 demise of the Philadelphia Phantoms.



Jakeim Hart '16
Sing Street: Original Broadway Cast Recording
Masterworks Broadway,
12 songs, 35 minutes

Hart is one of the main cast members of this new Broadway-bound musical. The show is based on a 2016 movie with the same name in which teenagers in Dublin, Ireland, form a band during the economic downturn of the mid-1980s.



Marcia Morgan
(philosophy)
Care Ethics and the Refugee Crisis: Emotions, Contestation and Agency
Routledge, 200 pages

Morgan draws upon historical and contemporary writings on self-care and care of the other to re-examine the relationship between care and justice. She also rethinks care with contestation.

First Weiss Fellow Reflects on His Inaugural Year



When A. Benjamin Miles III '13 (*above, at right*) attended his first Muhlenberg College Board of Trustees meeting last October, it wasn't a completely foreign environment. He'd been in touch with Chair Richard C. Crist Jr. '77 P'05 P'09 as well as two trustees just starting their terms over the summer, and he was familiar with much of the College's senior leadership via his previous work on the Alumni Board.

"It was possible to feel comfortable early on just because of the nature of the fellow trustees," Miles says. "I think I've been treated as a colleague on the board as opposed to an intern, so to speak. I hear the good things and the opportunities for improvement. There's no censorship."

This is what Miles wanted when he applied for the Weiss Fellowship, a selective trustee mentorship program designed to prepare recent Muhlenberg graduates for service and nonprofit leadership opportunities. It was a natural progression in his volunteer leadership, he says, an opportunity to see the inner workings of a group that helps steer the College. The three annual meetings Miles has attended so far have illuminated the complexity of the board and of the College's operations.

The April board meeting, held virtually due to COVID-19, helped demonstrate the importance of trustees "who have a high level of leadership experience, especially with uncertainty," he says. "A lot of trustees are calm in the face of uncertainty because they've been there before. For example, 2008 was also uncertain. We're going to get through this."

The fellowship, named in honor of Muhlenberg Life Trustee Bishop Harold "Hal" Weiss '52, empowers the College's trustees to appoint up to two Muhlenberg alumni to concurrent two-year terms on the College's board. The second Weiss Fellow, Laura Winger '10, began her term on July 1. Applicants to the Weiss Fellowship program must be Muhlenberg graduates who received their degrees from the College within the last 10 years. To learn more, visit muhlenbergconnect.com/weissfellowship. —MK

Four Students and Alumni Named Fulbright Semifinalists

In February, two seniors and two alumni were selected as semifinalists in the prestigious national competition to become Fulbright Scholars: Mia Becker '18, an international studies major; Holly Lehren '19, a political science and theatre major; Ryan Dimmick '20, a Spanish major; and Olivia Toner '20, a biochemistry and Spanish major. The Fulbright U.S. Student Program is the largest U.S. exchange program and provides approximately 2,000 grants annually for students to explore programs in more than 140 countries.

Jackson Davis '21 Earns Rossing Physics Scholarship



Davis was one of 11 students nationwide to receive the 2020-2021 Thomas D. Rossing Fund for Physics Education. The scholarship honors students studying physics from the 26 colleges and universities

associated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America who have displayed exemplary academic excellence. In addition to the recognition, Davis was named the recipient of a \$10,000 prize, the highest-award tier offered by the Rossing Fund.

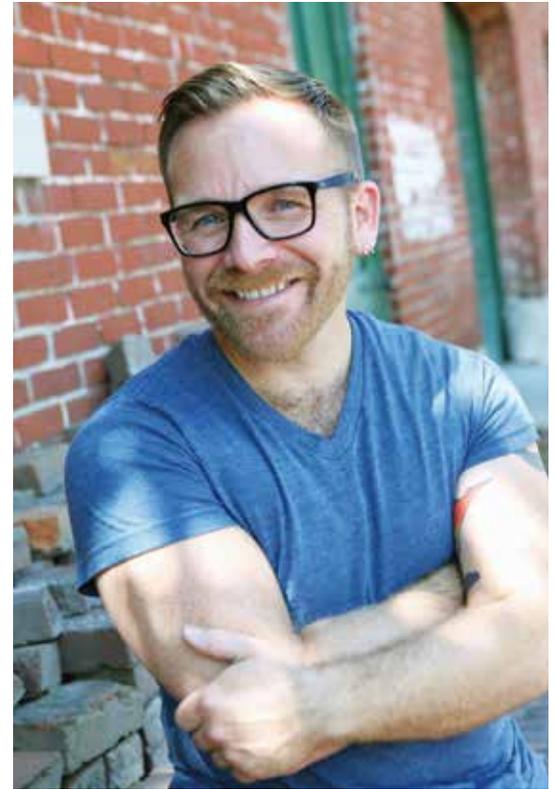
Muhlenberg Appoints Dance Program Director

Associate Professor of Dance Jeffrey Peterson officially assumed the role on July 1. Peterson returns from a year spent on sabbatical leave, pursuing creative and research interests.

Professor of Theatre James Peck, who has been serving in the role of interim director, says he will continue to work with Peterson in the coming months to ensure a smooth and successful transition. Professor of Dance Karen Dearborn, the program's founding director, remains in the role of dance recruitment director and will serve again this year as artistic director for the *Master Choreographers* concert.

"It's a privilege and an honor to take the reins as dance program director," Peterson says. "I'm grateful to Jim for his work this past year and to Karen for her tireless work developing this program into all of what it is today."

"I'm thrilled that Jeffrey has agreed to accept the role of director of dance," Peck says. "It has been my privilege to serve this year as a bridge between two exceptional educators. Karen Dearborn founded the program more than 25 years ago and in that time has shepherded it into a national leader in dance education in the context of the liberal arts ... Jeffrey, I'm sure, will also prove to be a superb leader. He will both cultivate the humane spirit that pervades the dance program and take it in exciting new directions." —SS



Why I Study ... fan cultures Francesca Coppa, Professor of English



PHOTO BY TOM AMICO

When *Star Wars* came out, a lot of kids got interested in science fiction: books, television, movies, conventions. I saw myself as a nerdy, science-y girl. If you've seen *Star Trek*, you know that Mr. Spock is an alien on a ship of humans, and that's the way a lot of women in the sciences feel. But science fiction fandom also had a culture of "writers are special people," encouraging you to use your imagination. My friends and I wrote fanfiction and read science fiction and watched *Doctor Who*.

When I went to college, I did two years of theoretical math and then

changed to English. There and in graduate school, I focused on "real literature." But I've found that every time you look at a "real art form," the earliest creators were women who were shoved aside. For example, the novel was really started by women and not taken particularly seriously at first. When an art form gets prestigious, it gets male-dominated.

During graduate school, the internet exploded, and one of the first things I found was science fiction fandom. I was like, "Oh my God, it's like a science fiction convention except it's all gone online." It was a convenient way to get back involved with it.

If you ask random people what they think of fanfiction, they'll say, "Isn't it bad writing on the internet?" No, it's just not curated.

When you're reading in an English department, you're reading a curated selection of great stuff. With fanfiction, some is as good as anything that you would publish in print. But there's also stuff that's maybe somebody's first try, that's maybe not as sophisticated as some other writing. But that's a feature—a lot of people read fanfiction and they think, *Hey, maybe writing is a thing I can do, too.*

Fanfiction is a huge, female-dominated literary universe, and I wrote a book about it (*The Fanfiction Reader: Folk Tales for the Digital Age*). My next book is on "vidding," or the art of fan music video. Like fanfiction, vidding is a grassroots, female-dominated art form, and great vids create emotions just like great movies do.

The College's First Alumna



In the early 20th century, there was increasing interest on the part of local teachers in upgrading and standardizing their educations to meet the more stringent certification requirements that were being established by educational administrative bodies. In the autumn of 1909, Muhlenberg College opened the Saturday School for Teachers. Twenty students, both male and female, enrolled during the 1909-1910 academic year.

The program grew slowly but steadily: In 1915, the first Summer School was established. In addition to traditional academic subjects, courses in agriculture, calisthenics and domestic science were offered. In 1917, Isaac Wright became the director of the Department of Philosophy and Pedagogy at Muhlenberg, or what became known as the Extension Division. The program grew rapidly; soon there were more students enrolled in the Extension School than in the regular College.

According to *100 Years of Adult Education at Muhlenberg College*, in 1918, the Board of Trustees approved a motion by which, if a female teacher should gain enough credits such that she would qualify for a diploma, one would be granted. The first female graduate of Muhlenberg College, Mabel Knecht, graduated with the Class of 1920. Approximately 450 women received diplomas prior to the College's becoming coeducational in 1957.

Mabel Knecht, the first woman to receive a diploma from Muhlenberg, is pictured at the far right of the top picture and second from left in the seated group.

If you have any items of interest to the Muhlenberg archives, please contact susanfalciani@muhlenberg.edu.

Offering Comfort in a Time of Crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the work of Rabbi Jason Kirschner '10, who serves as a chaplain at a New York City hospital.



PHOTOS BY BROOKE SLEZAK

At Mount Sinai Hospital in Manhattan, each time a COVID-19 patient is discharged, the opening lines of a Beatles classic play over the public address system.

Here comes the sun

Here comes the sun

And I say, it's all right

It's a simple thing, a 15-second respite from the calamity that the novel coronavirus has wrought, but for Rabbi Jason Kirschner '10 and his hospital colleagues, the song has come to represent something more powerful.

"It reminds you that things can get better," Kirschner says.

And that is a much-needed feeling for a city that was once the epicenter of the global pandemic. At press time, New York City alone had seen more COVID-19 cases than all but 11 countries outside the United States, and the number of confirmed and probable virus-related deaths had surpassed 17,500.

The city's health-care workers bore the brunt of the burden, working on the front lines of the outbreak as all who were able to shelter at home did. For Kirschner, who serves as the chaplain for two intensive care units and a rabbi for the entire hospital, it has been a kind of terrible honor.

He chose chaplaincy because he felt there was no better application of the Jewish faith than to comfort people when they need it the most. But the restrictions that come with serving COVID-19 patients have forced a change in the way Kirschner practices.

He can't enter rooms. He can't hold hands. He can't even offer a reassuring smile; it's concealed behind the N95 mask all hospital employees are required to wear. Most days, the best he can do is stand outside the door and pray. He recited Vidui—the Jewish deathbed confession prayer—more times in two months than he had in the past seven years.



But he knows each prayer, each request honored, brings a sense of comfort, particularly to the families who are unable to visit their relatives. With a few exceptions in the pediatric and maternity wings, hospital visitors have been banned until the virus dissipates.

“When I call families, I am met with overwhelming gratitude,” Kirschner says.

Kirschner grew up in the Forest Hills neighborhood of Queens, about 13 miles from where he now works. Though he felt a calling to attend a rabbinical school from the time he was a boy, it took a semester in Israel to solidify that vague desire into something that felt real and within his reach. During the spring of his junior year at Muhlenberg, where he was a history major with minors in Jewish studies and political science, Kirschner traveled to Jerusalem to study at Hebrew University.

“It was one of my best semesters,” he says. “I was really able to delve into the culture and explore religiosity.”

Upon his return, he applied and was accepted to the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City, an outcome that very much pleased his maternal grandmother, who died in hospice just months before his first semester there began. In fact, it was watching the hospice chaplains

console his mother that motivated Kirschner to choose the chaplaincy.

After completing his studies at the seminary and finishing a year-long residency at Mount Sinai, Kirschner joined the hospital full time in 2018. In addition to his duties as chaplain and rabbi, he also advises the hospital on Jewish policies and matters, including last year’s renovation of the hospital synagogue. But it is his work with Mount Sinai patients and their families that Kirschner values most. Right now, it’s harder to form the kinds of relationships that repeat visits and physical contact forge, but the impact of his work has not been lost. In many cases, it is more acute, particularly when he advises his own colleagues, offering them that bit of comfort or strength they need to get through another shift.

“Healing is a multi-faceted thing,” Kirschner says. “Doctors heal the body, others take care of the mind but the spirit, that’s what chaplains are there for.” —April Johnston

“Healing is a multi-faceted thing. Doctors heal the body, others take care of the mind but the spirit, that’s what chaplains are there for.”

—RABBI JASON KIRSCHNER '10

The Nation's Capital

How much does any United States president affect the economy?

By Ranajoy Ray-Chaudhuri

Two economic indicators—the unemployment rate and the stock market—made headlines during the first three years of Donald Trump's presidency: The former fell to a 50-year low and the latter broke records to ascend to dizzying heights before the 11-year bull run ended on March 11. Presidencies are inextricably intertwined with economic performance in the minds of the public. While perceptions play a role in business optimism and consumer confidence, how much can any president take credit when the economy prospers? Or, how much can the public blame any president when it falters?

Fiscal and monetary policies are the primary ways to influence the economy. Fiscal policy involves changing government spending or the tax structure. Government spending and revenue plans are laid out in the federal budget, a process initiated when the president submits a proposal to Congress with help from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). However, the budget resolutions later passed by the House and the Senate are different from this submission. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) was created in 1974 to limit the influence of the OMB on the budget process; the CBO conducts independent technical analysis of the economy, and Congress relies on it while formulating its budget proposals.

What, then, is the role of the president in this process? The House and Senate budget committees propose their own resolutions based on the president's budget, and the president's priorities for federal programs can shape the conversation in the chambers. The president can also veto the finalized appropriations bill; while Congress can override the veto with a two-thirds vote in both chambers, the difficulty of that makes it more inclined to negotiate with the president. If the bill is not signed before the start of the fiscal year and the president refuses to sign a continuing resolution to fund federal

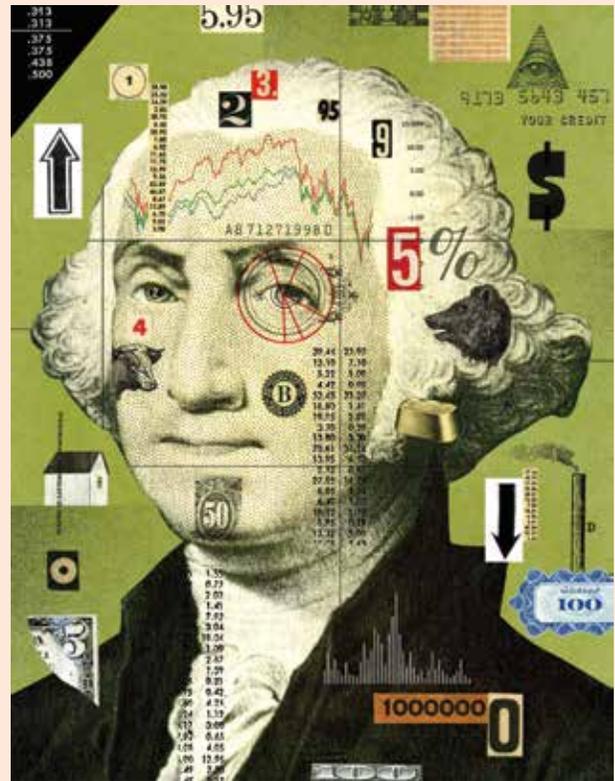
agencies, the government shuts down. This has happened during four of the last five administrations. A shutdown is powerful leverage for the Oval Office, though it comes at a terrible cost. For example, the dispute between Trump and Congress over border-wall funding and the resulting 35-day shutdown, the longest in history, shuttered nine federal agencies. Businesses could not obtain required permits and certifications, private companies could not go public and loans were held up. The CBO estimated that the shutdown decreased federal spending by around \$3 billion, lowering the growth rate by 0.2 percent in the last quarter of 2018 and 0.4 percent in the first quarter of 2019.

Monetary policy refers to changing money supply to influence interest rates, which is usually done through the purchase and sale of Treasury bonds by the trading desk of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Roughly half of American households have credit card debt and homeownership is the primary way to build wealth in this country, so interest rates have wide-ranging consequences. Research shows that central bank independence and transparency are essential for effective monetary policy. If the government called the shots, then the pressure to print money and keep interest rates low would be significant. These dangers are well-documented; for instance, under Robert Mugabe's administration, Zimbabwe printed banknotes that were Z\$100 trillion in face value but still not enough to cover a bus fare.

The Federal Reserve is headed by a seven-member Board of Governors. The U.S. president nominates board members and a chair and two vice chairs from among them, but the nominees must be confirmed by the Senate. The governors serve one 14-year term, with term expirations staggered so that presidents appoint only two governors during a single term in office. However, most governors leave to pursue other

While perceptions play a role in business optimism and consumer confidence, how much can any president take credit when the economy prospers? Or, how much can the public blame any president when it falters?

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID PLUNKERT



opportunities, and the median duration of serving on the board is just over five years. Trump has already filled three positions on the board, including two vice chairs, and there are two more vacancies he could fill. Once confirmed, governors cannot be removed except “for cause.”

Trump also replaced Janet Yellen with Jerome Powell as the Fed chair. While they share similar views on monetary policy, Powell’s different approach to financial regulations made him an attractive choice for a president who ran on a platform of deregulation. Their relationship has been less rosy since Powell’s confirmation as he and Trump do not see eye-to-eye on interest rates. While the central bank continues to steer clear of politics, public criticism from the president makes it difficult to lower the interest rate when needed while also appearing independent.

While there are multiple checks and balances on the executive branch when it comes to the economy, executive orders and presidential proclamations can have significant economic impacts. Examples include Trump’s downsizing of two national monuments in Utah and opening the land to mining and cattle grazing and withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Tariffs affect both consumers and producers through their impact on supply and prices,

and Trump has used them as the primary tool in the trade war with China. Barack Obama used executive orders to increase federal employment of veterans, individuals with disabilities and recent graduates; accelerate broadband infrastructure deployment; and establish a minimum wage and paid sick leave for federal contractors. Before him, George W. Bush used them to directly negotiate trade deals bypassing Congress, expedite energy projects and promote regulatory reform and financial literacy.

Simply being in the White House brings enormous visibility as the media picks up on the president’s remarks. Trump is the first president to use social media in a significant way to mobilize supporters and share his thoughts and decisions, and his tweets opposing coronavirus-induced lockdowns spurred demonstrations from those who wished to see the economy reopen quickly as well as action from some governors. However, the COVID-19 crisis also illustrates the limits of presidential power, when stocks slide and the president acknowledges that not much can be done except wait and “the market will take care of itself.”

Ranajoy Ray-Chaudhuri is an assistant professor of economics at Muhlenberg.

Q&A

10 Questions With... Beshar Tolaymat '15

Vascular surgery resident at Cooper University
Hospital in Camden, New Jersey

3

What three songs best describe you?

"Aerodynamic" by Daft Punk
"It Gets Funkier" by Vulfpeck
"You've Got Spirit, Kid" by Coheed and Cambria

1

Describe what you do in five words or fewer.

Surgically/non-surgically treat vascular disease

2

If you weren't a vascular surgeon, what would you be?

If I had still gone to medical school, a general surgeon; if I hadn't, a chemistry professor

4

What is your favorite place?

Order & Chaos, a coffee shop in Baltimore where I've spent a lot of time studying, stressing and destressing

5

What quality in others do you most admire?

Authenticity

6

What are you secretly good at?

Sleeping shortly after ingesting a lot of caffeine

7

What historical figure do you most identify with?

Vitas Gerulaitis, a professional tennis player who famously said, after losing 16 games in a row to Jimmy Connors before beating him in the 1980 Masters: "And let that be a lesson to you all. Nobody beats Vitas Gerulaitis 17 times in a row."

8

What is your most treasured possession?

A folder with memorabilia—mostly handwritten notes from people I've connected with over the years

9

What question should we have asked you?

"Do you get guac when it costs extra?"

10

What's the answer?

I'm in far too much medical school debt right now, but it's something I aspire to be able to do one day.



ILLUSTRATION BY CHARLIE POWELL

Muhlenberg in the Media

Chrysan Cronin (public health) was interviewed by *Men's Health* for two articles related to grocery shopping and food safety during the coronavirus pandemic as well as by the *New York Post* about family clusters of COVID-19 cases.

The articles were picked up by numerous major international publications in China, Canada, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and the United Kingdom.

Kathleen Bachynski (public health) spoke with *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Guardian* and *The British Medical Journal's* podcast about the pandemic.

The *Inquirer* articles dealt with testing for immunity and coronavirus cases in young people, and the *Guardian* piece was called "10 Key Lessons for the Future to be Learned from Fighting COVID-19." On the podcast, she discussed public health and the economy.

***The New York Times* featured a recent poll from the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion (MCIPO) as well as analysis from its director, Chris Borick (political science).**

The coverage was part of a lengthy article about recent economic growth in the Lehigh Valley, "What the Rebirth of This Old Steel Center Means for Trump."

Dean of Digital Learning Lora Taub (media & communication) spoke on remote instruction in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Inside Higher Ed*.

In March, as education across the country went virtual in response to COVID-19, both outlets interviewed Taub, who highlighted Muhlenberg's humanistic approach and fast pivot to all-remote teaching and learning.

***The Los Angeles Times* interviewed Sahar Sadeghi (sociology), who researches the Iranian diaspora.**

In the article, "Ethnic communities don't have a 'unified voice.' It's a challenge for 2020 candidates," Sadeghi emphasizes that Iranian Americans are not monolithic in their political leanings.

Kathleen Bachynski (public health) garnered coverage for her book in *The Atlantic* and *The New Yorker*.

Both outlets interviewed her in February about her new book, *No Game for Boys to Play: The History of Youth Football and the Origins of a Public Health Crisis*.

2400 Chew Selected as a Finalist for Best Podcast Award

The podcast, which documents conversations with Muhlenberg alumni about their current work, was one of seven finalists (out of more than 125 entries) for a 2020 Intercollegiate Broadcasting System (IBS) College Audio Award in the category of Best Podcast. The project is hosted and produced by Tami Katzoff, associate director of career services, engineered by Paul Krempasky Jr., general manager of WMUH, and edited by Morgan Wolper '19. The finalists were recognized at the 80th Annual IBS International Media Conference in New York City in early March. The fall season of *2400 Chew* begins September 8; new and archived episodes are hosted on Podbean and can be found on iTunes.

***The Princeton Review* Names Muhlenberg a Best Value College for 2020**

Muhlenberg is one of the nation's top 200 colleges for students seeking a superb education at an affordable price, according to *The Princeton Review*. The company chose its 200 Best Value Colleges for 2020 based on data it collected from its surveys of administrators at 656 colleges in 2018-2019. The company also factored in data from its surveys of students attending the institutions as well as PayScale.com surveys of alumni about their starting and mid-career salaries and job satisfaction figures.

Personally Speaking...



Riley Minkoff '20

Political science and Spanish double major, women's & gender studies minor, Long Beach, California

She's dreamed of a legal career for more than a decade...

"I've wanted to be a lawyer since the fourth grade. My teacher used to create trials and stories based on books we read. In one mock trial, I was the prosecutor arguing against Babe the pig. I believe the trial was about whether Babe had a hand in killing the dog in the book, because while Babe was being attacked, the dog helped to save him and ultimately died. I came home and was like, 'This is what I want to do.'"

...and she's bound for law school in the fall.

"I decided to commit to the University of San Diego for their dual degree program in law with a master's in peace and justice studies. They basically offered me a full ride for both programs. This dual degree program is really advocacy-focused, and that's what I'm interested in. A lot of the overlap between programs is in immigration policy, which is what I want to do."

She developed an interest in immigration policy while at Muhlenberg...

"With the 2016 election, there was a lot of emphasis on immigration and immigration policy, and my grandfather's an immigrant from Mexico. That got me thinking more about it and doing more research on immigration-related issues. My professors at Muhlenberg really pushed me to go further and look more into that."

...and the process of applying for a Truman Scholarship (for which she was a finalist) helped her narrow that interest into a senior thesis.

"To apply, you create a problem statement for what you're interested in studying and then you do a policy proposal. [Interim Dean of Academic Life Michele] Deegan was asking me what I was passionate about, and a lot of the work I've done is with the immigrant community or the LGBTQ+ community. I thought, 'Maybe it's something that combines those two.' I spent a year working on the Truman application, and I built on that research for my thesis. It's about the implications of adding a new category of asylum for LGBTQ+ people being persecuted for their sexual or gender identity. I am looking at how, from a human rights perspective, this category could humanize our immigration system and why it is important to focus on human-rights-related issues within the asylum process."

She taught bilingual citizenship classes in Allentown...

"I love translating and working with people. Last fall, [Associate Professor of Spanish Erika Sutherland] told me that there used to be a citizenship class taught at a church in downtown Allentown, but the students running it graduated. So, I found a couple other students who spoke Spanish and were interested in immigration policy. We came up with a curriculum and were granted an immigration kit. We went to the church during an event and put out a sign-up sheet. We got all these people who were interested. We worked mostly on the civics and English parts of the test; it was a lot of American politics and history questions. We taught the class in Spanish, but since the test is in English, we did most of the work in English. One of the women had her interview shortly before we left campus and we found out that she passed, so she became a citizen. That was so amazing to hear."

...and incorporated that experience into her work as an RJ Fellow.

"All the different honors programs have a different focus. The RJ Fellows' is on leadership and change in the community. My group for the senior capstone focused on immigration advocacy. Two of us used the citizenship classes as our advocacy work for the project. Two others don't speak Spanish, so they were asking students on campus the civics questions we were teaching to see if they'd pass. When they asked the questions without multiple choice—which is how the test is conducted for immigrants—not many people actually passed it. We were looking at, what does citizenship actually mean, if people who are natural-born citizens couldn't pass a citizenship test?"

A Bittersweet End to a Strong Season

Centennial Conference Coach of the Year Jason McLean '01 was in Iowa with the first three Muhlenberg wrestlers to qualify for the NCAA Championships since 2009 when COVID-19 shut down collegiate sports.

It was a few minutes before his athletes were scheduled to arrive at the U.S. Cellular Center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on March 12 when head wrestling coach Jason McLean '01 got the news: The Division III wrestling tournament, along with all other NCAA winter and spring championships, would be canceled due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

When his three qualifying wrestlers showed up for what was supposed to have been a workout,

they did what they were all there to do: They wrestled. On the floor of the arena, McLean and his athletes wrestled against each other, an empty stadium their background. There were tears, yes, but there were

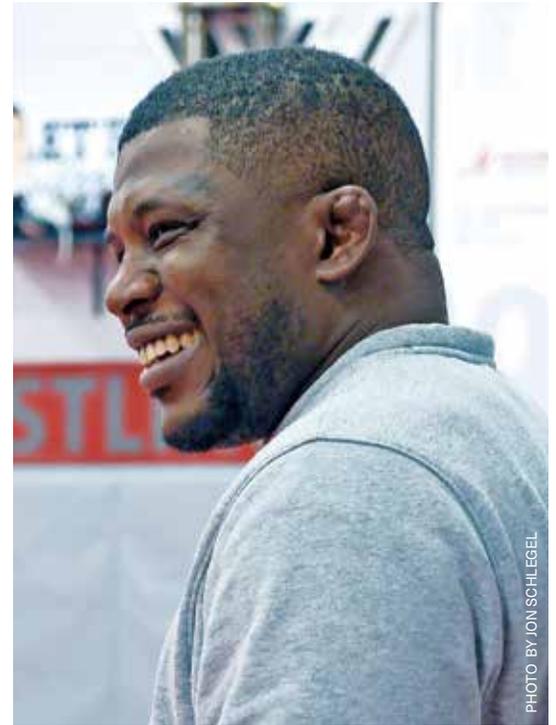
also laughs and smiles. Austin Sherman '20 walked around the mat, raising his arm in triumph.

The team went to dinner that night in Cedar Rapids. They stayed a final day, going to visit the wrestling powerhouse University of Iowa, even getting a tour of its facility from National Wrestling Hall of Famer Mark Ironside, who happened to be in the building.

Then they flew home, the athletes scattered across the northeast. McLean went straight to campus. He went to the locker room, cried for a bit. And then he walked home to his family.

For someone who never planned to coach, McLean certainly excels at it.

McLean, Muhlenberg's first All-American wrestler, was named the 2019-2020 Centennial Conference Coach of the Year in his third season with the College. The three athletes who qualified for the NCAA Championships under his leadership this year were the first Mules to be eligible for the national meet since 2009.



McLean graduated from Muhlenberg in 2001 as one of the best wrestlers in College history. He earned All-American honors that year after finishing eighth in the 141-pound division at the NCAA Championships. The Centennial Conference champion that year, he won 34 matches, the second-most in program history.

After his wrestling career ended, McLean worked in contract jobs, traveling the country, teaching people about software and hardware.

But home came calling. McLean, who began high school at Scotch Plains-Fanwood in New Jersey, was recruited to volunteer at nearby New Brunswick High School for the 2006-2007 season. The father of a Muhlenberg friend of McLean's (Carl SanFilippo '03) was principal there. He knew McLean had wrestled, and he asked for McLean's help while the school tried to reboot a wrestling program that had been defunct for 25 years. They started with kids who had been cut from the football or basketball teams. There would be younger siblings hanging around practice, which had to be held in hallways or at other nearby schools—there was no available, dedicated practice space. In the program's third year, McLean became head coach.

“It’s more than wrestling. Wrestling is just a vessel. It’s changing these students’ lives.”

—JASON McLEAN '01

"I built such a relationship with the kids," says McLean. "It was about the experience. I've fallen in love with the process. That just makes me want to get people that I'm responsible for to their full potential. I'll do whatever I can to show people you believe in them and they'll believe in you."

In 2016, McLean was named the Greater Middlesex Conference Blue Division Coach of the Year. The team that once practiced in hallways won 20 matches under his leadership. He was building a real program, one that had community buy-in. The fourth-graders that originally stopped by his hallway practices were now on the team.

But the call of his alma mater was too strong.

When McLean left New Brunswick for Muhlenberg, he was sure to always keep the city in mind.

"In New Brunswick," says heavyweight Ramiro Osuna '22, a political science and media & communication major, "people usually just graduate high school. He wanted us all to go to college. And now that he has the title at Muhlenberg, he's created a funnel. I'm now one of three from New Brunswick."

Osuna, a captain of the football and wrestling teams in high school who also won a district wrestling title, was offered a full scholarship to play at The College of New Jersey. He chose Muhlenberg—which, like all DIII institutions, does not offer athletic scholarships—to be with McLean. "He

sacrificed that to come to Muhlenberg," says McLean. "Whoever thought being a rinky dink wrestling coach in New Brunswick that you can have enough of an effect on people that they want to change their home."

A few years ago, McLean got a call from Jeorcy Peña '23, one of his former team members in New Brunswick. McLean recounted the conversation:

Peña: "I want to go to Muhlenberg."

McLean: "Why?"

Peña: "To change my life."

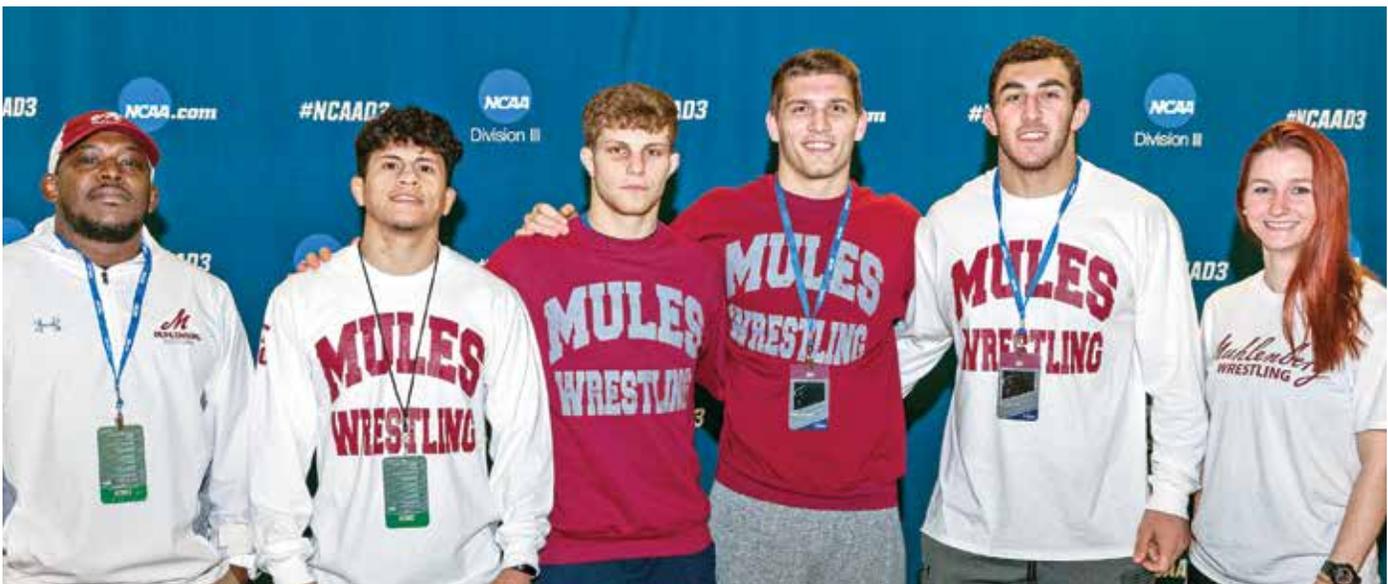
McLean: "If you want to do your part, I'll do my part."

"And I told him," McLean recalls, "'this is what I need academically,' and he did it. He didn't apply to any other college. For a student to put that much faith in me, it's pretty phenomenal. I don't know if he realizes it. I'm choking up just talking about it."

Osuna finished third at the Northeast/Mideast Futures Tournament and was 11-7 on the season. Peña, a 133-pound freshman, was 4-8 in his first season at the College.

The wrestling team saw major success at the NCAA Mideast Regional in Ithaca, New York—qualifying more than two wrestlers for the national meet for the first time since 2007—and McLean is still bringing his intensity and obsession to every facet of the program. But he is also able to look beyond the mat to see the bigger picture: "It's more than wrestling," he says. "Wrestling is just a vessel. It's changing these students' lives."
—Jeremy Fuchs '14

From left to right: Head Coach Jason McLean '01; Assistant Coach Gueseppe Rea; national qualifiers Austin Sherman '20, Jimmy Fratantoni '20 and Luca Colestock '22; and Assistant Athletic Trainer Chelsea Bortz



A Time for Action and Learning

Note: The resources referenced below are available at muhlenberg.edu/diversityatmuhlenberg.



We stand at a moment in our country and on our campus that is at once familiar and quite different. Protests by Black Americans and their allies against police brutality and the systemic racism that pervades our history are not new. Everyone reading this can recall the moments and the names—from Rodney King to Trayvon Martin and George Floyd and myriad others throughout our history. But this moment is different.

Colleges serve as a microcosm of society at large and this is true of Muhlenberg as well. Spurred by protests of a student group called the

Diversity Vanguard in 2013, the College engaged in the development of a diversity strategic plan. It was perhaps the first time the College formally recognized and began to address issues of systemic racism. You can read more about the plan on Muhlenberg's Diversity & Inclusion website.

Over time, diversity and inclusion have become central to the values and missions of liberal arts institutions, and Muhlenberg is no exception. Much about our institutional diversity and our commitment to inclusion has changed at the College—from the first Black student of Muhlenberg, Clara Lane (who attended in 1926 and 1927), and the formal admittance of women beginning in 1957 to the creation of the Emerging Leaders program and addition of an associate provost for faculty and diversity initiatives more recently. But like society, changes for racial equity at the College have been driven not by majority students, faculty and staff, but by those groups affected by systemic oppression. And for all the accomplishments we might list, our students, faculty, staff and alumni of color have told us that we have not done enough.

That brings us back to this moment and the choice we have made as an institution. Colleges typically respond to diversity protests with limited, although sincere, efforts to create visible change. But those changes often struggle because they are embedded within the systems and cultures that are inherently oppressive to people of color. Without addressing those systems, we cannot be successful. Recruiting more students, faculty and staff of color is not enough. We need to change Muhlenberg so that people of color can thrive in the same manner as our white community members. That is why we are committed to actions that create deep, tangible, lasting change at the College.

In order to do this, we must move past the notion of this being a moment and embrace

it as a movement. It is no longer enough for anyone to say we are not racist—that only serves to absolve us from further action. We must commit to being anti-racist. In doing so, we commit to understanding our role and where and how we can each make change for

Colleges typically respond to diversity protests with limited, although sincere, efforts to create visible change. But those changes often struggle because they are embedded within the systems and cultures that are inherently oppressive to people of color. Without addressing those systems, we cannot be successful.

the better. As we write this, the top 10 books on *The New York Times* nonfiction best-sellers list are all about bias, anti-racism and associated topics. You'll find most of these titles on a list of resources we've put together on diversity on our website under the Black Lives Matter link. We recommend two books as a starting point: *Biased: Uncovering the Hidden Prejudice That Shapes What We*

See, Think and Do by Jennifer L. Eberhardt and *How to Be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi.

In early June, with the protests in reaction to the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor in their early days, the Black faculty of the College sent a letter to the Muhlenberg community along with proposed actions. The letter recognized the grief and tremendous stress that Black members of our community were under and asked all who would to sign on in support of changing Muhlenberg “to dismantle current systems of power, racism and inequality and build just, fully equitable systems in their place.” To date, 366 faculty and staff members of Muhlenberg College have signed in support. This is important, because the letter was to the community, and each person who signed in support is signaling that they will take ownership of their responsibility to move the College forward in pursuit of these ideals. A movement, not a moment.

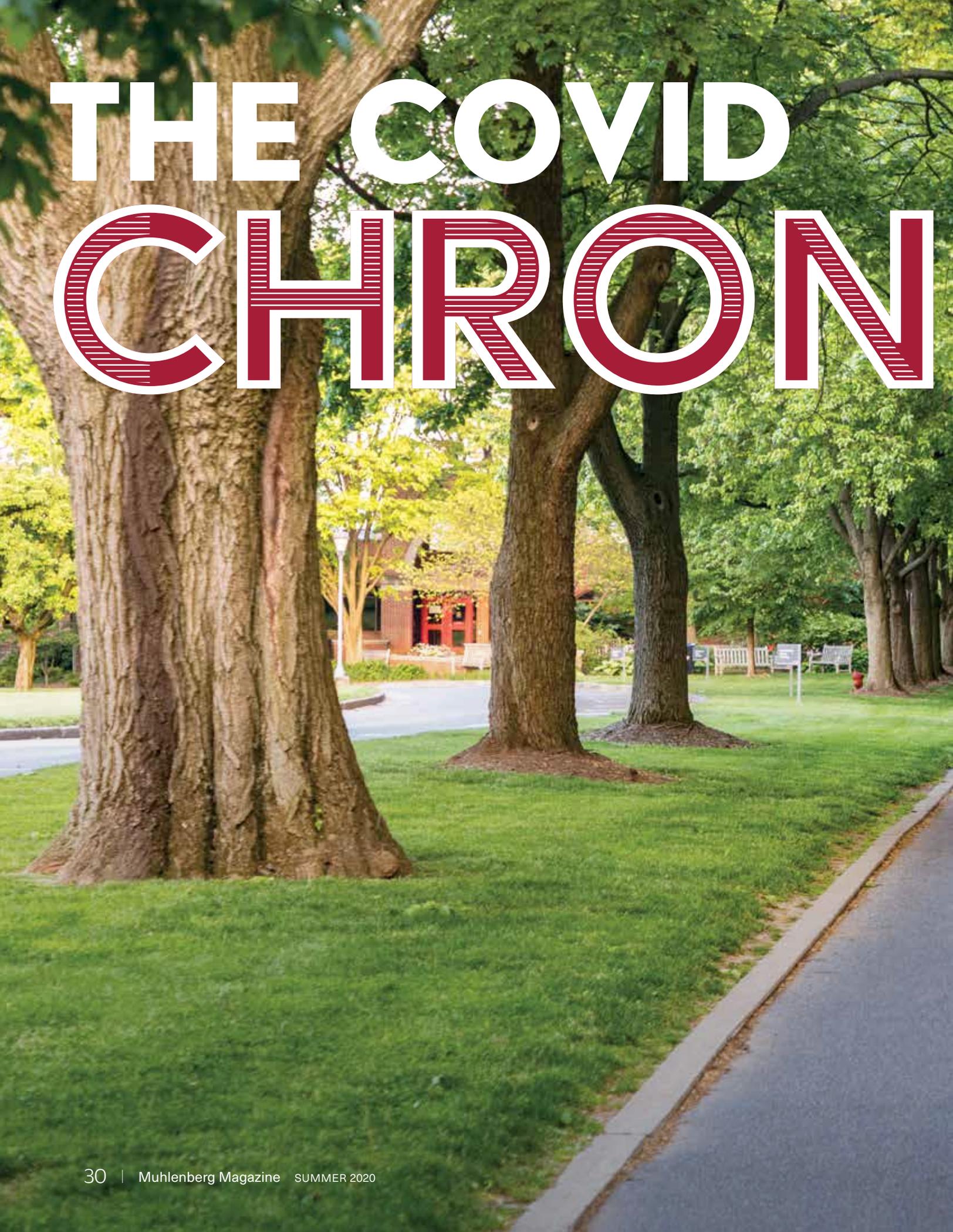
Shortly after the letter to the community, President Harring shared a number of action

steps, many of which were also part of the Black faculty action plan, to which the College is committed. These commitments include the hire of two tenure-track faculty positions with joint appointments in Africana studies to expand the program; increased funding to strengthen the Emerging Leaders program as well as expanding it from a two-year to a four-year program; providing additional funding for the Presidential Diversity Innovation Grants to be targeted for anti-racist programs; and increased funding and resources for the Office of Multicultural Life to strengthen programs on diversity and social justice, student advocacy, leadership development and community building.

We do not view these action steps as the entirety of the College's responsibility or commitment to becoming an anti-racist institution. We continue work on Muhlenberg's Diversity Strategic Plan and its intersections with the College's overarching strategic plan. The work of the President's Diversity Advisory Council (PDAC) to assess progress (see the 2019 progress report on our diversity website) and prioritize next steps remains critical. But we will not restrict our thinking to the current plans. Instead, we will begin the process of looking more deeply at the College's systems and at our cultural norms to effect the kind of lasting change that we have long talked about.

Our Muhlenberg community must work together as we make Muhlenberg a place for all of our members. The board stands in full support of the administration and of students, faculty, staff and alumni of color and their allies and will serve as a partner, keeping issues of equity and justice in the forefront of its decision-making process. Time and time again, we have proven that when we work together as a community, we find the power and strength to accomplish great things. We believe we all have the power to make Muhlenberg better and in turn, can make wider change in our society possible.

*Kathleen E. Harring, President
Richard C. Crist Jr. '77 P'05 P'09, Chair,
Muhlenberg College Board of Trustees*

A photograph of a campus scene. In the foreground, a paved path curves along a green lawn. Several large, mature trees with thick trunks and dense green foliage are scattered across the scene. In the background, a brick building with a red door is visible through the trees. The overall atmosphere is bright and sunny.

THE COVID CHRON

ICLES

A photograph of a tree-lined campus walkway. The path is paved and leads into the distance. On the right side, there are several large, mature trees with green leaves. A red banner with a white 'M' is hanging from a lamppost. Further down the path, there are more trees and a building with a stone facade. The overall scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a pleasant day on campus.

IN EARLY MARCH, JUST AS STUDENTS RETURNED FROM BREAK AND THE WEATHER STARTED TO WARM, THE COLLEGE SPRANG INTO ACTION AS A RAPIDLY EVOLVING GLOBAL CRISIS WAS ABOUT TO ARRIVE ON ITS DOORSTEP. THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS UPENDED THE LIVES OF BILLIONS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD, INCLUDING THOSE OF MUHLENBERG'S STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF AND ALUMNI. AND WHILE THE FINISH LINE REMAINS OUT OF SIGHT, IT'S POSSIBLE TO REFLECT ON HOW THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY CAME TOGETHER TO FACE THIS CRISIS AND HOW IT CONTINUES TO EXHIBIT RESILIENCE, COMPASSION AND TOGETHERNESS (FROM A SAFE DISTANCE, OF COURSE) AS THE PANDEMIC WEARS ON.

BY MEGHAN KITA

Remote Instruction IN A CRISIS

IN THE SPACE OF A LONG WEEKEND IN MARCH, FACULTY PREPARED TO CONTINUE THEIR SPRING COURSES ONLINE. THE ENSUING WEEKS WERE CHALLENGING EVEN FOR THOSE WITH DIGITAL LEARNING BACKGROUNDS. ONCE THE SEMESTER WRAPPED, THE COLLEGE SHIFTED ITS FOCUS TO ENSURE ALL FACULTY TEACHING IN THE FALL WOULD UNDERGO RIGOROUS ONLINE-LEARNING TRAINING TO BE PREPARED FOR ANYTHING THAT THE SEMESTER MIGHT BRING.



PHOTOS BY BILL KELLER

It's Monday, March 16, just a couple days after most students left campus in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and faculty and staff are scattered throughout Moyer Hall's Miller Forum. About a dozen people sit in the four rows of chairs in front, with at least two empty chairs between each person. Some attendees spread out at round tables farther back. A few people lean against the walls to better practice "social distancing," a novel concept to many ... for now.

The day's purpose is training to continue courses through what's planned to be a four-week campus closure. (This time next week, the College will announce that it will remain closed for the entire spring semester in response to a surge of COVID-19 cases locally and nationally.) Some faculty are here to learn how to begin teaching remotely; others, to help teach their peers—42 faculty members have completed the five-month training required to plan, construct and teach a fully online course. The digital learning team and the Office of Information Technology (OIT) collaborated to create today's agenda, which begins with remarks from Interim Provost Bruce Anderson and Dean for Digital Learning Lora Taub.

Taub begins by inviting everyone in the room to take a deep breath. Then, she shares some of the ways she's coping with uncertainty and change (yoga, Twitter, chocolate, poetry) as well as an excerpt from a Wendell Berry poem called "Stay Home." The day's purpose, she says, is to find a way for faculty and students to stay home while continuing the coursework that began on campus. And that coursework will not—should not—look the same as it would have had campus remained open.

COVID-19: A TIMELINE

Understand the College's response in the context of what was happening globally, nationally and locally.

At left, Tom Sciarrino, director of instructional technology and media services, troubleshoots for a faculty member joining course continuity training remotely on March 16. At right, Professor of Chemistry Keri Colabroy advises Professor of English David Rosenwasser during the training.



“Teaching remotely in an emergency means scaling back,” she tells the spread-out crowd. “The only equivalent is your care for and commitment to your students.”

In six weeks, she'll email her colleagues about the next step—a massive summertime mobilization of online-learning resources. Once the spring semester's crash course is complete, Muhlenberg will require all 240 full-time and adjunct faculty who are teaching in the fall and who haven't completed the five-month training to attend Camp Design Online. This faculty development program will enable thoughtful construction of online courses and provide opportunities for peer feedback. Though the COVID-19 crisis wears on, this summer provides an opportunity to ensure that future courses—whether in-person, online or some combination of the two—don't feel, to faculty or to students, like they were hurriedly refashioned amid panic and pandemic.

The Guiding Principles of Online Instruction

Taub, who's also a professor of media & communication, and the digital learning team led the first faculty cohort through online-learning training in the spring of 2015. Many institutions that offer online learning contract with outside vendors to design and build the courses, she says. At Muhlenberg, faculty begin their training with conversations about what it means to teach the liberal arts online and end by offering an online course they built themselves that summer, with support from the digital learning team and feedback from faculty peers.

The difference between those thoughtfully constructed courses and the remote instruction that happened this spring mirrors the difference between five

months of training and, essentially, a long weekend. Camp Design Online sits in a middle ground, with a week of dedicated instruction, a month of independent work and another week focused on peer partnership, feedback and sharing. However, throughout all iterations of its training, the digital learning team has stressed similar guiding principles.

First, faculty need to meet students where they are. What this means is recognizing that students are all over the map, literally and figuratively. Some students live in different time zones. Some may be without reliable home internet access or a quiet, private space to learn. During the COVID-19 crisis, some may be working to financially support their families, taking care of a sick relative, grieving the death of a loved one or even suffering from the disease themselves.

Erika Bagley, an associate professor of psychology who was part of the first online-learning cohort in 2015, has taught Introductory Psychology online every summer since. She sees some parallels between this spring's



Creating those moments of social connection doesn't happen as spontaneously or as easily in an exclusively online environment. You have to make the decision to pursue them.



—KERI COLABROY (CHEMISTRY)

Tuesday, January 7

The pathogen causing an outbreak of disease in China's Hubei Province is identified as a novel coronavirus.

Monday, January 20

The United States confirms its first case of COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, in Washington state.

situation and her usual online teaching—her online students need flexibility because they're also coming from a variety of environments and balancing a variety of responsibilities. As such, Bagley largely eschews things like mandatory, synchronous sessions on video-conferencing platforms like Zoom for course materials that can be accessed at any time, which is one best practice of online learning.

That doesn't, however, mean Zoom has no place: Another best practice is ensuring something Taub calls "presence." "In all online learning, students need to know that their faculty are present and faculty likewise need to know that their students are present," she says. "We use technology in the service of creating and cultivating presence."

Presence can take a variety of forms, from a daily email or text message to standing, optional "student hours" on Zoom. Faculty are encouraged to be consistent about reaching out to students, to make sure students know how to get in touch with them and to give timely feedback on work. One advantage to switching to remote instruction halfway through the semester this spring was that faculty and students had time to build relationships in person. If any fall semester courses are online for some reason, faculty will need to find a way to instill a sense of community and togetherness.

"Creating those moments of social connection doesn't happen as spontaneously or as easily in an exclusively online environment," says Professor of Chemistry Keri Colabroy, who is in her fourth summer of teaching her Kitchen Chemistry course online. "You have to make the decision to pursue them."

"Hurled Into Remote Learning"

This spring's jarring switch to remote instruction was a scenario the College had imagined before. Tom Sciarrino, director of instructional technology

and media services (ITMS), remembers preparing for a potential campus closure in 2009, as H1N1 influenza spread globally. Technology has come a long way since then, as has online learning at the College. However, the 42 faculty fully trained to conduct courses online make up a small fraction of the 183 full-time faculty and up to 100 adjuncts teaching in any given semester.

Anderson, the interim provost, says the first COVID-19 alarm bells went off in February, when study-abroad programs started shutting down. States on the West Coast were experiencing cases (with some institutions there going remote), and senior staff started meeting daily in early March. Muhlenberg became the first Lehigh Valley higher education institution to send students home and transition to remote instruction, announcing its decision on Tuesday, March 10.

Then, Taub and Sciarrino collaboratively drew together their teams' expertise to develop and implement a crash course to ensure faculty in need could feel more confident with the basics of rapidly switching to remote instruction. The following Monday and Tuesday would be reserved for course continuity training, which faculty could attend in person or remotely. While the digital learning team and OIT planned the sessions, the faculty who'd been trained in online learning volunteered to help their peers as well, both during the sessions and outside them.

"That collective wisdom and experience of our faculty has been a tremendous asset," Taub says. "I don't know of any other liberal arts campuses that would be able to call upon that many faculty distributed across virtually every department to be able to lend a hand."

In addition to communicating the aforementioned guiding pedagogical principles, the Monday and Tuesday sessions would offer both basic and advanced training on three key technologies: Canvas (the College's online course management system), Zoom and Google's G Suite. Keeping it simple, technology-wise, was for the students' benefit as well as the faculty's, says Taub—the cognitive load of competing technologies can distract from the material.

Assistant Professor of Economics Ranajoy Ray-Chaudhuri takes notes during the March training.



Friday, January 31

The first COVID-19 cases are confirmed in Italy, which would go on to experience more than 240,000 infections; 22 Muhlenberg students are studying abroad there.

Tuesday, February 25

The first study-abroad cancellation to affect Muhlenberg students—a program in Seoul, South Korea—takes place. It had been postponed several times, and the students never traveled there.

Saturday, February 29

The United States reports its first death from COVID-19 in Washington state. The College's spring break begins.



“We were hurled into remote learning,” Taub says of this period. “A lot of the language is around a shift, a transition, a pivot to remote learning. I think those words are too generous. They’re not accurate. It was a spin or a whirl or really, a hurl.”

Learning by Doing

When this all began, Anderson says some faculty were wondering whether they could make the change to remote learning at all. Most had never taught online in any capacity and were being asked to do so under great duress.

The switch created a wide range of challenges, both pedagogical and technological. Some faculty struggled to adapt classwork and projects for the online space and, in some cases, needed to scrap what they’d planned to do in person and come up with something new. Because many faculty had not previously used Canvas to do things like conduct quizzes or accept homework assignments, OIT received many inquiries about how to best leverage all the available tools. As the number of Zoom meetings conducted at the College rose from 443 in February to 4,454 in March, the number of questions about the platform also skyrocketed—how to record sessions, how to integrate Zoom with Canvas, how to avoid interruptions by internet trolls.

As expected, Anderson fielded some student concerns—for example, about one professor hold-

ing a mandatory, synchronous class at 8 a.m. Eastern time, despite having a student on the West Coast. But far more of what he heard was positive feedback from faculty about their students: By and large, they showed up to learn online, engaged with the material and each other and were understanding when technical mishaps occurred.

“The vast majority of our students were so incredibly resilient throughout this process,” says Holly Cate, an associate professor of theatre who taught Acting II and Physical Theatre this spring. “We all made it through this experience together by working together—it wasn’t like we on the faculty side pulled them through. I really feel like students hung in there and stayed curious and committed and connected to each other.”

The move to “the Rectangle,” a term for the virtual world Cate borrowed from Stanley Road Associate Professor of Neuroscience Jeremy Teissere, came with plenty of obstacles. For example, her Acting II students were about to move into preparation for their midterm scenes with a partner right after spring break. She replaced that exercise with monologues—responding to another actor is difficult

Professor of Physics Brett Fadem and Senior Lecturer of Biology Kim Heiman consult during course continuity training.



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—HOLLY CATE (THEATRE)

Thursday, March 5

The College announces travel policies and communication requirements for community members who’ve traveled to COVID-19 hotspots.

Friday, March 6

Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf confirms the first two presumptive positive COVID-19 cases in the state.

experiment before a week dedicated to peer feedback. Throughout, they can consult with faculty digital fellows (who've been through the semester-long training and taught online previously), the instructional designers and student digital learning assistants, who can test assignments and course design and provide a student's point of view.

"What we want to provide in this experience are the resources, practices and tools so that faculty can bring themselves to their online teaching in the same ways they bring themselves to their on-the-ground teaching," Taub says, "and so their students can bring themselves to their learning in the same ways they do on campus."

Taub and her team have been in touch with digital learning colleagues at other institutions who are grappling with similar challenges. While the faculty Camp Design Online course is administered through Canvas, the bulk of the course's material is publicly available at campdesign.online for other institutions to adapt (with credit) and use. Muhlenberg is a leader in the commu-

nity of liberal arts digital learning, Taub says, and this moment is no different. Together with faculty and students, the digital learning team has been engaged in online learning for nearly six years. The institutional commitment to this work is deep.

"We're making an investment in the faculty. The hope is we won't just do this, but we're going to do it well. The expectation is everybody is going to do a great job," Anderson says. "Asking around in the Lehigh Valley, every time we bring up what we're doing, they're all amazed. Nobody else has anything like this going on. It's a point of pride for us, and it's going to serve us well in the long run."



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—INTERIM PROVOST BRUCE ANDERSON



Wednesday, March 11

The World Health Organization declares COVID-19 a pandemic.

Thursday, March 12

The Lehigh Valley's first case of COVID-19 is confirmed in neighboring Northampton County.

Closing Campus,

At 8:47 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, students received an email from President Kathleen E. Harring that stopped them in their tracks: Due to the evolving threat of COVID-19, the message said, all students who were able would need to leave campus by 2 p.m. that Saturday and to remain home until at least April 13. The students had just returned from spring break two days earlier. At the time, none of the Lehigh Valley's other colleges and universities had announced plans to send students home. (Lafayette College and Lehigh University did so the next day; DeSales University, Cedar Crest College and Moravian College announced a move to remote instruction the day after that.)

Muhlenberg had less than four days to ensure the safe departure of as many students living in its residence halls, apartments and houses as possible. More than 1,500 left by the deadline. Here, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Allison Gulati and Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Housing & Residence Life Courtney Stephens recount what took place between that email and the departure of the majority of the student body.

Alerting the Students

Given the rapid evolution of the situation, there was little choice but to announce the decision after many campus offices had closed.



Allison Gulati The Monday after we had returned from spring break, this was still looking like a difficult but manageable situation. Over the course of Tuesday, it was closing in around us. Other states were declaring emergencies, including a number we draw a large percentage of students from. The Allentown Health Bureau let us know that it was only a matter of time before Pennsylvania joined those ranks. It became clear what we needed to do from a health and safety perspective. We prefer to have these communications go out during the day, but some classes are only held Mondays and Wednesdays, and our faculty wanted to have that last, in-person opportunity to have conversations with students about what their course would look like remotely.



Courtney Stephens The biggest question that students started asking was, "Do I have to pack up all of my belongings?" Allison [Gulati] sent an email later that night answering that question—no, they did not—because of the volume of students who'd asked.

Fielding Questions and Requests

The next day, College staff began to tackle the logistics of ensuring as many students as possible could leave safely and promptly. The first step was understanding students' needs.

AG I met with my team of about 40 student affairs staff the morning after we made the announcement to let them know what the implications of all this were. We scheduled open hours of time where we would be available to students in person and via phone and text. From Tuesday through Saturday, we fielded almost 3,000 calls and emails from students and parents in the Dean of Students Office.

CS [Associate Director of Housing Operations] Katie Shelley and I put together a survey that went out to the entire student body asking what their plans were. Students could say, "I live on campus and understand I need to leave by 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 14," or they could request to stay for a variety of reasons.

AG Embedded in that form were questions about financial assistance—if students needed it to travel home, if they would need help with technology access once they got home, if they would need help with any other emergency personal issues like groceries or hygiene products.

CS We were reviewing those surveys pretty much around the clock. Wednesday through Friday were a whirlwind. We wanted to be as compassionate as possible while recognizing that it was for students' safety that they should leave campus.

Offering Help

The College was prepared to assist students who requested to stay for a financial reason: Last year, the Office of the Dean of Students launched an Emergency Grant Fund with a budget of about \$10,000 per semester to support students with urgent financial needs. In January, the Board of Trustees reallocated a surplus of student-fee money to be repurposed toward the fund as well. In the wake of the pandemic, donors have continued to contribute to the fund, with upwards of \$70,000 raised since students left campus.

AG Students could ask to stay because of an extenuating home, family or financial request; because their primary address was Muhlenberg College; because they lacked technology or internet access at home; because they lived more than 300 miles away; or because they lived within a five-mile radius of a COVID-19 hotspot in their home community. If we could assist with a flight or bus tick-

Friday, March 13

Last day of on-campus classes. Governor Wolf announces a closure of the state's K-12 schools lasting at least two weeks.

Sunday, March 15

Lehigh County reports its first presumptive positive COVID-19 case.

Monday, March 16

The College asks all nonessential employees who are able to work remotely to begin doing so no later than Wednesday, March 18.

QUICKLY

HERE'S WHAT IT
TOOK TO SEND MOST
STUDENTS HOME IN A
MANNER OF DAYS.

ets or train tickets or gas money, we did that. If we could assist with funds for technology or internet access, we did that. If a student hadn't planned to have to pay for groceries because they had a meal plan, we helped with that.

CS The initial funds were mostly used for getting students home. If I'm from California and I find out three days before I'm supposed to be home that I have to go, that plane ticket is going to cost a lot more than if I had known two months in advance.

AG Since that time, some students have requested additional support. For example, some have lost medical insurance and needed a prescription, some have had parents furloughed, some have realized that sharing a computer with a sibling was okay for a few weeks but it wouldn't work for the rest of the semester. All told, we've given approximately \$60,000 to more than 160 students since the crisis began.

Shuttles and Sweeps

The actual moving-out process fell mainly on students, though the College provided airport transportation. Once the majority of students had left, Stephens and her team had to ensure on-campus properties were vacant and in an acceptable condition. A team of 64 resident advisors (RAs) usually handles this process, but the College had encouraged even those students to leave.

AG We have shuttle drivers—a lot of students know them by name. They did, in a period of just a few days, something like 36 runs to JFK, LaGuardia, Newark, Philadelphia to get students to their flights.

CS We had decided right away that the RAs needed to get home. But, there are only five of us in the Office of Housing & Residence Life, and there was no way we were going to check 1,900 beds by ourselves in a timely manner. We had 10 or 12 volunteers from the Division of Student Affairs who suited up and walked through the halls with us and helped check rooms and make sure things were locked and secure and ready to go on Monday.



PHOTO BY PAUL PEARSON

Anyone coming to retrieve belongings when that process began in mid-May was required to sign up for a time slot in advance and wear a mask on campus.

Those Who Stayed

After financial concerns were addressed, there were still about 200 students who stayed on campus for some length of time. That number dwindled to about 60 by the semester's end. Due to Pennsylvania's shelter-in-place order, students were unable to retrieve their belongings (or to ask the College to pack and store or ship them) until mid-May.

CS People were truly scared, and at that time, Allentown was just seeing its first cases. Our families that were in areas that had already shut down thought their students would be safer on campus. [Executive Director of Health and Counseling Services] Brynmarie Dorsey tried to walk through what safety would look like if their students stayed and that while the College was doing everything it could, there was only so much protection we could offer.

AG Over about a two-week period, they realized, "Whoa! Pennsylvania has a lot of cases." One of the concerns we kept communicating was if you're here and you become sick, you won't have as many people to take care of you as you potentially would at home. On the flip side, if somebody at home gets really sick and you're here, we can't guarantee you'll be able to travel there. We saw more and more students go home over that.

**Monday, March 16,
and Tuesday, March 17**

The College holds course continuity training for faculty, both in person and via Zoom.

Wednesday, March 18

Pennsylvania reports the state's first COVID-19 death, a patient in Northampton County.

Admissions Goes VIRTUAL

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FORCED THE COLLEGE TO RETHINK HOW IT ENGAGES WITH ACCEPTED STUDENTS AND HOW IT SHARES INFORMATION WITH PROSPECTIVE FAMILIES.

Muhlenberg's annual Through the Red Doors event invites accepted students to campus, where they hear from faculty, meet their peers and experience the splendor of April in Allentown. The Office of Admissions designed the day to foster a sense of connection between these students and their potential future home. But what happens when the College's famous red doors are shuttered, when there are only internet connections to be made?

That's what happened this spring due to the pandemic. By the time acceptance packets were mailed in mid-March, the College had committed to conducting Through the Red Doors virtually.

With campus closed, all admissions contact has been happening from a distance, from the first interactions with high school students through the continued engagement with recent graduates who've committed to the College. Through it all, the Office of Admissions and supporting staff have endeavored to replicate, as closely as possible, the personal contact and connection Muhlenberg is known for.

"We, as a staff, are incredibly proud to be part of Muhlenberg and to convey that energy," says Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Melissa Falk '92.

Through the Red Doors

Due to COVID-19, Muhlenberg's accepted students had until June 1—a month later than usual—to decide whether they'd be joining the College. However, many other colleges and universities stuck with a May 1 deadline, so Muhlenberg needed to provide its accepted students with enough information to rule those institutions out before April's end.

"We were really focusing on the question, 'What are the elements of that on-campus Through the Red Doors experience that can be conveyed in some fashion, but not necessarily in one day?'" Falk says. "That gave people the opportunity to imagine a timeline that was very different."

That timeline began with a student-to-student Zoom event on April 7 and ended with an interactive sample first-year course on May 19. In all, the College offered about 20 virtual events, most of them in April, that were tailored to specific areas of academic or extracurricular interest to keep the sessions purposeful and personalized. Senior Assistant Director of Admissions Chelsea Schoen took the lead on developing the schedule and many of the virtual sessions. Director of Instructional Technology and Media Services Tom Sciarrino and his team helped ensure the admissions group had what they needed to run the sessions without interruption from technical mishaps or uninvited, disruptive guests.

"This is a team that understands how every interaction is critical and the opportunity for people's attention is very limited," Falk says. "If the technology were to crash, we missed that opportunity."

For those unable to attend in real time, Zoom sessions were recorded, captioned and shared on muhlenberg.edu/accepted, an area of the College website for accepted students built in the wake of COVID-19. The site serves as a hub for information

A screenshot from one of the approximately 20 virtual events the Office of Admissions held for accepted students in April and May



Thursday, March 19

The Centennial Conference cancels all spring athletics competitions and championships for the remainder of the academic year. Governor Wolf orders all non-life-sustaining businesses in Pennsylvania to close by 8 p.m.

Saturday, March 21

The first case of COVID-19 is confirmed within the Muhlenberg community.

Monday, March 23

The College announces that the remainder of the spring semester will be completed remotely and that commencement-related activities will be postponed.

about academics, student life, campus and the local community. In addition to the Zoom recordings, the site hosts new informational videos, a Class of 2024 social media stream and free Muhlenberg-themed virtual backgrounds, all assembled by the College's communications staff. The site also allowed families to register for 15-minute financial-aid-related phone calls with Falk or Director of Financial Aid Greg Mitton; between March 26 and April 30, they completed about 220 of these sessions.

"We have a separate incoming student site that's very much focused around, 'So you've given us a deposit and decided to attend, here are the things you need to know for orientation,'" says Senior Director of Communications Bill Keller, who built the accepted students' site. "This was trying to assure students that they made the right decision. It's about continuing the conversation to keep them excited about the College."

Summer Advising

For students who commit to Muhlenberg by making a deposit, the next step along the journey toward orientation in August is typically an on-campus advising session in June. Traditionally, this was handled primarily by the dean of academic life's office. Due to a trend of students putting down deposits at more than one institution (leaving an unforecasted void wherever they ultimately decide against attending), Falk got involved for the first time this year. She, Interim Dean of Academic Life Michele Deegan and Assistant Dean of Students & Director of Student Transitions Steve Dutton (who manages orientation) spearheaded the organization of five virtual advising dates that took place in June. A Summer Advising section of the College website allowed students to register, provided a checklist of things to do before their advising day and shared what students should expect on their advising day.

"The cornerstone was still that individual advising session—for a student to have a Zoom session with a faculty member to discuss their interests and what they want to pursue, to get that guidance the way they would in person," Falk says.

However, the on-campus June advising experience also includes an academic and activities fair in the Event Space of Seegers Union. "Some students might want to have a lengthy conversation about a club or an activity; some might want to pick up a pamphlet and walk away," Sciarrino says. "We tried to replicate the fluidness of that event."

To do that, he and partners in student and academic life created interactive info sessions that took place on Zoom on each of the five advising days. Those days began with live welcome messages from President Kathleen E. Harring and Deegan and continued into the info sessions and one-on-one advising sessions (also conducted via Zoom) with faculty members. Each advising day wrapped with separate 40-minute sessions in the evening for students and for their families: Parents could Zoom with parents of current students, while students could Zoom with the orientation groups and leaders they hope to meet in person on campus in August.

Dutton says this was the first time orientation leaders were part of advising: "It was important to me that incoming students have the opportunity to build connections with upper-class peers that have the same lived experiences earlier than we've provided previously," he says. "Orientation leaders will remain in touch with their students throughout the summer, continuing to answer their questions, foster relationships and prepare them for their arrival to campus."

Prospective Students

While Muhlenberg's Class of 2024 is the first to undergo accepted-student events virtually, the Classes of 2025, 2026 and beyond—the students just starting to explore their options—are still seeking the information they'd normally get on, say, a campus tour. In lieu of tours, the College is offering virtual information sessions with admissions counselors, conducted via Zoom; the Meet a Mule program, in which current students offer their contact information to field questions from prospective students; and Workshop Wednesdays, Zoom sessions with admissions counselors dedicated to specific topics like athletics, financial aid or crafting a college essay. High school counselors are also reaching out, says Schoen—for example, one asked her and her peers at other institutions to answer a few questions on video to add to a gallery the school's juniors can browse.

While it's impossible to perfectly translate in-person, individualized contact into the digital space, the College has tried—and the response from prospective students has been positive: "This is allowing families to still think of us. They want their questions answered," Schoen says. "Muhlenberg is known for the on-campus, community feel. To see they are still willing to engage in this virtual space, where it's different for us, has given us some heart."

BY THE NUMBERS

Quantifying the College's use of technology from March 16 to May 8 (the last day of the semester)

 Google Meet

5,318
total meetings

51.5
minutes average duration

15,647
total participants

 zoom

18,793
total meetings

5,256,366
total minutes

50
minutes average duration

348
sessions on average per day

Wednesday, March 25

Governor Wolf extends a stay-at-home order to Lehigh and Northampton Counties, joining eight other counties already under such an order.

Thursday, March 26

The College announces a temporary policy to allow any student to elect to take any class as pass/fail this spring.



ALUMNI MAKING DIFFE

ELISA VICARI '08: SUPPORTING THE SICKEST PATIENTS IN A COVID-19 ICU

Usually, the families of intensive care unit (ICU) patients spend hours at their bedsides, talking to their loved ones (even if they're unconscious), playing their favorite music and holding their hands. Families find comfort in giving this support and patients can respond to receiving it. Elisa Vicari '08, a licensed clinical social worker at North Shore University Hospital in Long Island, New York, has witnessed this firsthand. She is a guide to her ICU's patients and their families, helping make discharge plans in the best-case scenarios and connecting loved ones to funeral planning resources and support groups in the worst.

In early March, Vicari's role became even more significant. Within a week of the first COVID-19 patient's arrival in her ICU, all 18 beds were filled with "the sickest of the sickest COVID patients."

"Within the blink of an eye, it seemed like the whole hospital was consumed by the virus," says Vicari. (More than 20,000 COVID-19 patients had been admitted to the Northwell Health system, of which North Shore is a part, by early June.)

The hospital barred visitors, though two per patient could come for end-of-life situations. To bridge the gap, Vicari asked on social media for an iPad donation—the hospital didn't have enough. In a week, donors had given 20 iPads as well as \$11,000 to buy more.

Meanwhile, Vicari tried to fill in for loved ones. In FaceTime sessions with families, she asked for specifics about each patient—

what they liked to eat, the names of their pets, their favorite songs. When she'd visit the patients, she'd use specifics from those conversations ("you have to get home to Rover!") to provide personal support. She would FaceTime families from a patient's room and hold the patient's hand while loved ones spoke from the iPad.

She also served as the contact for family members coming for an end-of-life visit: coordinating the timing, dressing them in protective equipment and accompanying them into the room for the patient's final moments. She would bring in the iPad so more loved ones could say their goodbyes virtually. (Vicari's work was featured in a *New York Times* story about one of her patients.) Though end-of-life visits are always difficult, some of these families hadn't seen their loved one in five or six weeks. They were coming into the hospital for the first time to see their loved one for the last time. This added a layer of distress not typically present in these situations.

Three months after the whirlwind began, it seemed to be at least on pause—by early June, Vicari's ICU had no COVID-19 patients. Limitations on visitors remained in effect, as did strict personal protective equipment requirements. Still, Vicari finally felt like she could take a breather and reflect on what had just happened.

"I witnessed a lot of devastation, but also a lot of really amazing things, incredible things, illnesses people were able to come out of," she says. "I truly believe I was able to witness some miracles."

Monday, March 30

The College announces it has had discussions with local health-care networks about use of its housing for medical personnel if needed.

Wednesday, April 1

Governor Wolf extends the stay-at-home order to include the entire state of Pennsylvania.

Monday, April 6

The College announces the cancellation of fall semester foreign study abroad programs, the decision to conduct all summer courses online and a number of

A RENCE



TODD GOLDSTEIN '08: SUPPLYING CRITICAL DEVICES TO FRONT-LINE PROVIDERS

Vicari and Goldstein, who knew each other from Muhlenberg, connected again during the pandemic—Goldstein was able to ask Vicari, a front-line worker, what her team needed, and Vicari was able to quickly test and provide valuable feedback on Goldstein's team's designs.

If someone had told Todd Goldstein '08 in January what he'd be doing at work today, he would have asked if he got a new job. He hasn't—Goldstein has been the director of 3D design and innovation at Northwell Health, a New York City-area hospital system, since his lab opened about three years ago. Prior to COVID-19, his lab made 3D models of complex problems—large tumors, severe fractures—to help surgeons simulate a procedure before actually doing it. They also created training models for medical students and prototypes for medical devices, among other tasks.

The pandemic put a halt to all elective surgeries, a term that encompasses even very urgent surgeries for diseases like cancer. Soon, Goldstein and his team started receiving requests to 3D print items the hospital was unable to order, including personal protective equipment and the swabs used to conduct COVID-19 tests.

Then, a fear that the hospital system would run out of ventilators began to spread. Goldstein and his team designed an adapter to split ventilators between patients (which was never needed) and one to convert bilevel positive airway pressure machines into ventilators (which was—450 patients were treated this way).

The team's largest project has been swab design and production to compensate for manufacturer shortages. In collaboration with a team from the University of South Florida's Tampa General Hospital, they designed and printed swabs that were then put

through a clinical trial to ensure accuracy. This trial happened quickly because so many local patients were being tested—200 of them agreed to be swabbed with the prototypes as well as conventional swabs, and Goldstein's team compared the results.

Once the trial proved the 3D-printed swabs effective, the lab started manufacturing them for the health system. They'd made more than 100,000 by early June. They also released the design for other labs with the ability to print their own; Goldstein estimates there are at least 20 health systems nationwide that could do it.

While the number of admitted COVID-19 patients has slowed, Northwell Health still isn't permitting elective surgeries—only emergency surgeries and the most urgent of the urgent are currently allowed. All of those patients need to be tested frequently, so the availability of swabs remains critical. Everyone who enters the system's facilities is required to wear a mask, and Goldstein has been asked to design clear masks so hearing-impaired patients can read their providers' lips. Masks like these exist, but the supply is low and the demand, due to COVID-19, is suddenly high.

"So many things have been on backorder," Goldstein says. "We're coming up with medical devices and testing them within days and weeks instead of the years it usually takes. We've shifted completely to being a design and production facility for medical devices."

admissions-related changes (the extension of the deposit deadline to June 1, the decision to conduct Through the Red Doors and Summer Advising virtually).

Thursday, April 9

Governor Wolf announces the closure of K-12 schools for the remainder of the school year.

MEET MORE MULES WHO'VE BEEN PART OF THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19.



LEONARD LIGHTNER '12

director of community and economic development for the city of Allentown

Lightner supervises a variety of city bureaus, including business development, planning, community development and housing. Amid COVID-19, Lightner's position has become a delicate dance of protecting public health while ensuring the survival of as many local businesses as possible. He supervises the Health Bureau, which has been focused on contact tracing to slow the spread of COVID-19, as well as the Special Events Bureau, which has been fielding calls from people trying to find ways around the state's limits on how many people can gather. He has overseen the distribution of Small Business Stabilization funds (which have helped more than 125 small businesses in the city) as well as approximately \$400,000 to help newly unemployed tenants pay rent. The question guiding Lightner's work at this point, he says, is "how do we maintain social distancing and keep people safe while understanding that people need to have that socialization we're meant to have?" —MK



KENDRA MOORE '13

emergency room physician assistant, St. Mary's General Hospital (Passaic, New Jersey)

Moore's hospital saw its first suspected COVID-19 patient around mid-March. Soon after, the ER began to fill up with others who likely had the illness. Passaic County, New Jersey, where Moore works, borders Bergen County, once one of the nation's most significant coronavirus hotspots.

A real challenge for Moore was figuring out which patients needed to go to the ICU and which she could stabilize in the ER. She felt lucky that she didn't have to witness the progression of the worst cases like her colleagues in the ICU. Still, most patients (besides minors) could not come in with family, and it was scary for many of them to not know when—or if—they would see their loved ones again. Complicating matters was the fact that regular emergencies (lacerations, appendicitis) never stopped. The pandemic forced the ER to become more efficient, which is something Moore hopes will continue.—A.C. Shilton



SHERRINE EID '97

global lead for real-world evidence and epidemiology, SAS Institute, Inc.

Eid leads the six full-time epidemiologists at the software company SAS who are part of the company's COVID Scientific Advisory Team. The company offers software that uses statistics and algorithms to inform a wide variety of industries. During the pandemic, health-care entities; governments outside the U.S.; federal, state and local governments within the U.S.; and large retailers have been among those using SAS software for a variety of purposes—from contact tracing and disease modeling to understanding potential supply-chain disruptions. Eid's team includes and works closely with mathematicians, modeling experts, statisticians and econometricians who have more advanced approaches to analytics than epidemiologists do.

"Epidemiology as an industry hasn't seen a pandemic like this in decades," Eid says. "There was no need to advance those methods. COVID kind of shocked the whole system." —MK



ALEX CORGAN '08

president, Select Event Group (Laurel, Maryland)

Select Event Group was selected to construct 100 temporary emergency department facilities in a 45-day window to help ease the strain of COVID-19 on Maryland hospitals.

"There aren't many companies in the nation capable of accommodating such a request—certainly no others in the region," Corgan says.

Under normal circumstances, Select Event Group provides anything a client might need (structures, power, HVAC, tables, chairs and linens) to produce an event, including concerts, corporate galas and weddings. But Corgan and his team also have experience in disaster response, providing temporary structures in response to hurricanes and other emergency situations to support first responders, utility workers and people harmed by the disaster. Today, several of the expansion hospital facilities are in use in some capacity. —Heather Mayer Irvine

To find longer versions of these stories, plus more stories of alumni who've been involved in the COVID-19 response,

VISIT [MUHLENBERG.EDU/ALUMNISTORIES](https://www.muhlenberg.edu/alumnistories).

Saturday, May 2

The College holds its annual Honors Convocation virtually.

Friday, May 8

The state of Pennsylvania lifts the stay-at-home and business closure orders for 24 counties in the north-west and north-central regions of the state with low per-capita case counts, though significant restrictions remain in place.

Monday, May 11

The College holds a virtual celebration of the end of the year for all students.

Apart, but TOGETHER



THE OFFICE OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, LEADERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT LED THE EFFORT TO CONTINUE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES VIRTUALLY THROUGHOUT THE SPRING CAMPUS CLOSURE TO MAINTAIN A SENSE OF COMMUNITY.

On Friday, March 20, Director of Student Organizations, Leadership & Engagement Ellen Lentine (pictured) logged into the videoconferencing platform Zoom to lead students through a round of 2000s pop culture trivia. It was the College's first foray into virtual student activities, taking place less than a week after students left campus due to the threat of COVID-19. Jonah Adamcik '20, the presidential assistant for the Office of Student Organizations, Leadership & Engagement, says he and his colleagues thought maybe a couple dozen students would participate. Instead, they had 110.

"That just kind of blew us away," Adamcik says. "It showed us that there is demand for this. The students want to stay connected."

The Office of Student Organizations, Leadership & Engagement and members of the Muhlenberg Activities Council (MAC) began discussing how to continue offering activities virtually as soon as everyone was learning or working from home. They started by researching how other institutions were handling this. At the same time, entertainment agencies Lentine had worked with previously reached out to her with their virtual offerings. That's how trivia came about.

"These programs were so much easier to do in terms of manpower that we could offer something every day," she says. They were also far less expensive—one trivia session cost about a tenth of what it would cost to bring a non-celebrity performer to

campus for a night—which meant there was ample budget left over for prizes like GrubHub gift cards and other easily shippable items.

MAC offered trivia Tuesdays and Fridays, Movie Mondays (using the Netflix Party extension for Google Chrome) plus a variety of other events (video game tournaments, a virtual escape room, a game show) throughout the back half of the semester. Adamcik worked out the logistics to enable live-streaming of student performers on MAC's social channels at least every Friday.

Other offices also offered activities—for example, daily Zoom seminars with Career Center staff, twice-weekly "ZOOMba" with Health Services' Kelly Powell—but Lentine's team populated the newsletters that let students know each Monday what was coming up that week. Her office also coordinated the Virtual Senior Days celebrations, which began with a virtual toast to the graduates and ended with a virtual President's Conferral of Degrees.

The virtual activities were so popular during the spring that Dean of Students Allison Gulati asked Lentine and her team to continue them throughout the summer. The goals are to keep students connected to the Muhlenberg community and to allow incoming students to start meeting new people.

"It's important to me that the students know we're still thinking about them," Lentine says, "and that we still want them to have a great experience at Muhlenberg, whether they're here on the campus or not."



"It's important to me that the students know we're still thinking about them and that we still want them to have a great experience at Muhlenberg, whether they're here on the campus or not."



—ELLEN LENTINE

Wednesday, May 13

Virtual Senior Days begin and last through Sunday, May 17. Events include a pub night, Last Lecture, cap decorating, President Kathleen E. Harring's year-end address and a class toast.

Saturday, May 16

The state of Pennsylvania permits the College to allow students to begin returning to collect their belongings.



THE GRIEF OF A SPRING SEMESTER CUT

FOR STUDENTS—SENIORS, ESPECIALLY—NO AMOUNT OF VIRTUAL ACTIVITY COULD COMPARE WITH BEING TOGETHER ON MUHLENBERG'S CAMPUS.

Senior year comes with stressors: It's the culmination of four years of study and work, and by the final semester, students might find themselves saying, "Oh my gosh, we are ready to be done with this." Marta Rardin '20 remembers hearing comments like that among her friend group in January and February. A campus shutdown due to a global pandemic, however, was not what they had in mind.

"A fact of graduation meant we would be parting ways—some of us for good, some of us not for good. The relationships we've built would be changing," says Rardin. "Not getting the final months to just be present, physically present with friends, is gut-wrenching."

Students, like everyone whose lives were upended by COVID-19, experienced grief, says the Rev. Kristen Glass Perez, college chaplain. "Grief is the process human beings go through when they've experienced a loss," Glass Perez says. "It's really part of the human condition. It helps you move through the big thing that's happened or is happening."

For seniors, that grief was exacerbated because they won't be returning for another academic year.

They lost the timeline they'd anticipated throughout their time at the College for the buildup to and execution of senior week events and commencement.

"There is a really deep sense of wanting that 'one more moment' that they haven't been able to have yet to celebrate," says Allison Gulati, vice president for student affairs and dean of students. "But even recreating that at another point doesn't replace or change what's been lost in that senior year, when there are so many formative moments that happen."

While most students continued their coursework remotely, they lost most everything else that comes with being together on the College's residential campus. For some, that meant canceled performances, athletic seasons and/or opportunities to showcase their research or art. For all, it meant physical separation from roommates, friends and mentors.

"I'm a busybody. I was not put on this earth to ride down the lazy river," says Zaire Carter '22. Among other things, he's a tour guide, a resident advisor, the president of the Men of Color Network and the secretary of the Emerging Leaders Council. He's also an active participant in the College's theatre scene.

Saturday, May 23

The first faculty cohort begins its Camp Design Online training. The program will instruct 240 full-time and adjunct faculty in online course design and teaching over the summer.

Friday, June 5

The state of Pennsylvania lifts the stay-at-home and business closure orders for Lehigh and Northampton Counties; they're among the last in the state to have restrictions lifted.

Wednesday, June 24

The College announces its fall plans: Students will start the semester on campus a week earlier than planned (on August 24) and will return home before Thanksgiving. For more details, see page 6.



PHOTO BY PAUL PEARSON

SHORT

A SENIOR'S REFLECTION



I UNDERSTAND WHY THE SEMESTER HAD TO END EARLY, BUT MY HEART ACHES FOR WHAT I MISSED.
BY MADISON FORREST '20

I change how I feel about the pandemic almost hour to hour.

Sometimes, I'm angry. As a senior, I couldn't end my time at Muhlenberg on my terms. Quintessential senior milestones and celebrations, including commencement, have been postponed. But there are some things for the senior class that can't be rescheduled, like sitting outside on the first warm day of spring, precious moments in the dining hall with friends, our last class ever at Muhlenberg, last late nights out or thoughtful discussions with our professors and peers. This abrupt ending did not include all the things that past graduating classes got to experience, which contributed to the melancholy feeling surrounding graduation.

Whenever I feel sad, upset or angry at the situation, I sometimes also feel guilty—the measures taken were, while inconvenient to 2020 celebrations, absolutely necessary and ultimately life-saving.

As a public health major, I know how vital practicing social distancing has been to limiting the spread of COVID-19. I commend the College administrators for making an unprecedented decision to prioritize the health of not only the Muhlenberg community, but the Lehigh Valley. I previously had to explain the relevance of my major and why I was studying it. This spring, it was suddenly thrown center-stage, and there was never a better time to be studying public health.

I am grateful that I had the opportunity to end my volleyball career on my own terms. I can't imagine the pain the spring-season senior athletes endured. My heart goes out to the seniors who had their final seasons abruptly taken from them in addition to everything else.

However, the Muhlenberg community is strong. There's something to be said for how much students, faculty and staff have missed how things were pre-lockdown on our little campus. I'm envious of the underclassmen who will return to 'Berg, but I know that Muhlenberg will always hold a special place in my heart even though my time on campus was cut short.

He missed the on-camps connectivity so much that he dug out an iPad he rarely used before to conduct long, aimless FaceTime sessions. "FaceTiming one of your friends while you are both just going about your daily routine is so therapeutic," he says. Rardin, for her part, pledged to write a physical, snail-mail letter every day on top of connecting with friends via phone and video chat. But none of it replicated spending time with friends in person—it was more effort for less reward.

Rardin expects a sense of closure to come whenever she can return to campus and be among friends again to celebrate their accomplishments. Carter, a rising junior, sees this moment as a wake-up call of sorts—a reminder that college lasts only four years, at best, and that it's a special time not to take for granted. And the absence is likely to make students even fonder of the people and places they were forced to spend time apart from.

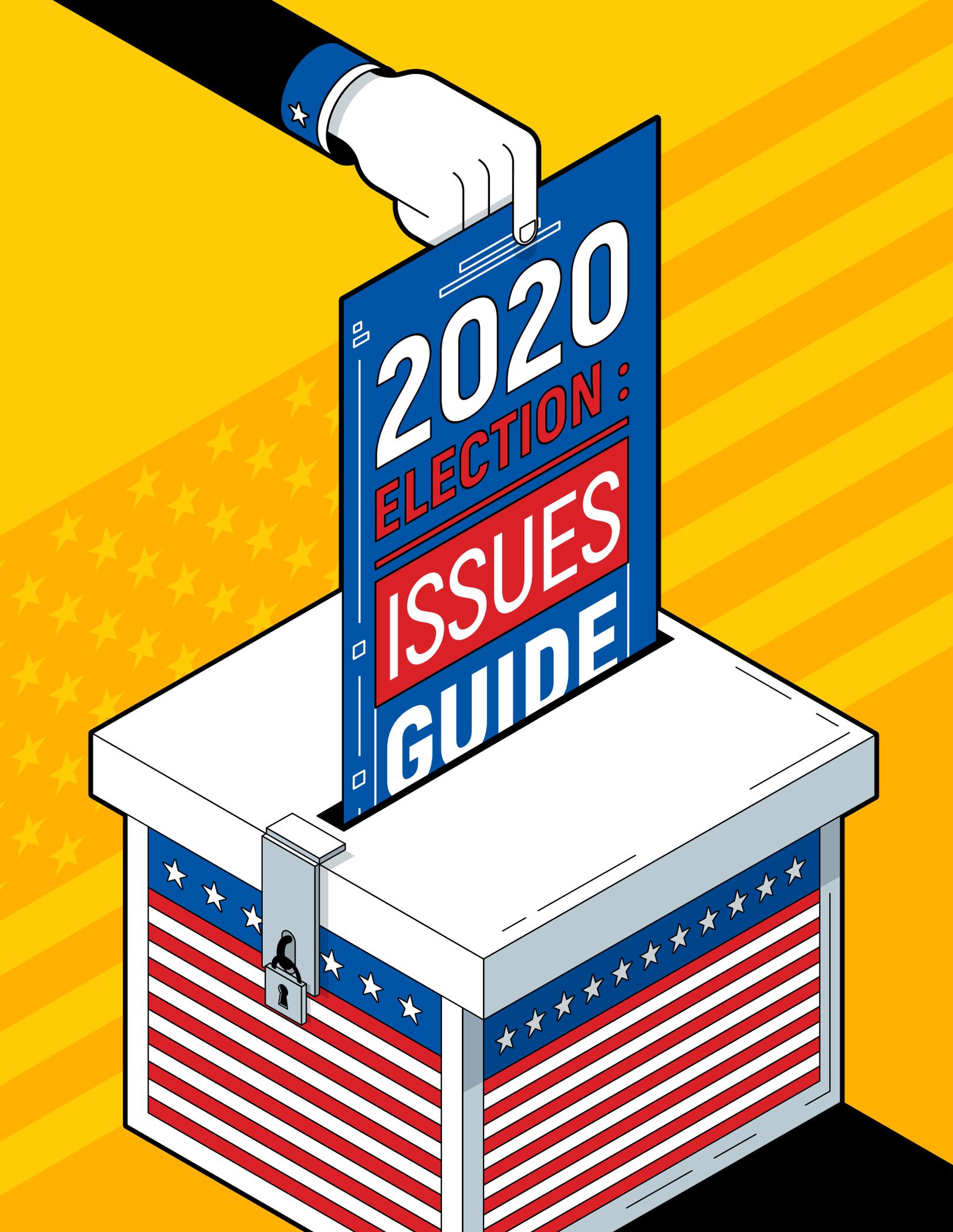
This April, in a phone interview from his home in New Jersey, Carter was already imagining, with great enthusiasm, the moment when students are able to return to campus and be together, saying, "When we do, the electric connectivity, the fire that's going to happen...is going to be a pure joy to experience. It's going to be phenomenal."

Tuesday, July 7

The Centennial Conference announces it will suspend all fall sports. It says it plans to reevaluate the decision by September's end but that it has already determined a fall football season will not be possible.

Mid-July and Beyond

To find the latest updates on the College's plans in this continually evolving situation, visit muhlenberg.edu/covidupdates.



2020

ELECTION:

ISSUES

GUIDE



DIRECTOR OF THE MUHLENBERG COLLEGE INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC OPINION AND PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE CHRIS BORICK CHARACTERIZES THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL RACE AS AMONG THE MOST ANTICIPATED ELECTIONS IN RECENT AMERICAN HISTORY. TO MEET THIS MOMENT, *MUHLENBERG MAGAZINE* WORKED WITH FACULTY EXPERTS TO PROVIDE BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT FOR SOME OF THE IMPORTANT ISSUES VOTERS WILL HEAR ABOUT IN THE LEADUP TO NOVEMBER.

HEALTH CARE

The Expert: Chrysan Cronin, assistant professor and director of public health

The United States is an unhealthy nation. According to the CDC, 90 percent of the \$3.5 trillion in annual health-care costs are for people with chronic health conditions. Nothing kills more Americans than heart disease and stroke. Combined with other conditions that typically occur along with them, they cost our health-care system \$199 billion per year. The U.S. has more hospital admissions for preventable diseases such as asthma, congestive heart failure and diabetes than any other comparable countries. Investment in a health-care system, including public health programs that aim to protect the wellness of all Americans, is essential if we ever hope to decrease health-care costs associated with treating preventable diseases.

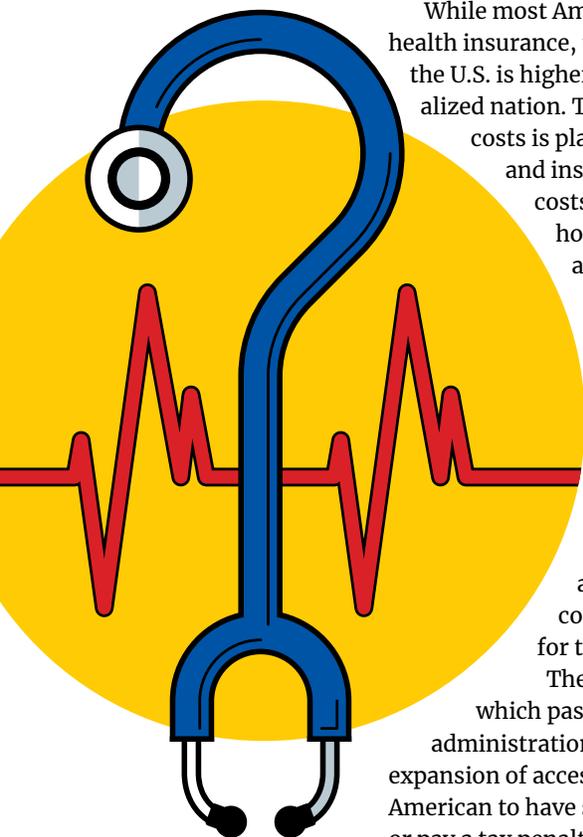
While most Americans have some form of health insurance, the cost of health services in the U.S. is higher than in any other industrialized nation. Typically, blame for these high costs is placed on both pharmaceutical and insurance companies, but these costs are driven by doctors and hospitals as well. Many people are concerned about these high costs: In a February NBC News/Commonwealth Fund health-care poll, nearly 25 percent of likely voters surveyed said they were worried about being able to afford their health-care costs in the next 12 months, and 80 percent of likely voters believe a reduction in health-care costs should be a high priority for the next president.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA), which passed in 2010 during the Obama administration, was the most recent federal expansion of access. The ACA required every American to have some level of health insurance or pay a tax penalty. It also expanded Medicaid and provided subsidies for private coverage. In

late 2017, Congress passed a bill that canceled, effective 2019, the penalty for not carrying health insurance, but the rest of the ACA currently remains intact. (The Supreme Court will hear a challenge to the law brought by more than a dozen Republican attorneys general later this year.) According to the nonprofit Kaiser Family Foundation, the percentage of non-elderly Americans to be uninsured hit a historic low (10 percent) in 2016, down from 17.8 percent in 2010. By 2018, the uninsured rate had increased to 10.4 percent.

In the debate surrounding health care, the terms “universal health care,” “single payer,” “Medicare for all” and “socialized medicine” are often used synonymously, which contributes to voter confusion. Universal health care simply means that everyone has health insurance, achieved through public or private programs or both. A single-payer system is one in which a single payer, usually the government, covers the cost of everyone’s health care while the health delivery system (hospitals, health-care providers) stays private. “Medicare for all” extends the current Medicare program for seniors to everyone; in this scenario, the government pays for health care but citizens pay a premium for their coverage. “Socialized medicine” goes a step further: The government not only pays for health care but also owns the hospitals and employs the health-care providers.

Democrats typically support federal funding for health care, whereas Republicans generally favor a more state-based approach. The Republican push to repeal the ACA has, so far, been unsuccessful, and the party has yet to unveil a replacement plan to ensure affordable health care. Within the Democratic party, there has been disagreement about the best way forward. The candidates need to have solid health-care plans in place before the election so voters will know which plan is likely to be most beneficial to not only themselves, but also to the country, before they cast their votes.



THE ECONOMY

The Expert: Yariv Fadlon, assistant professor of economics

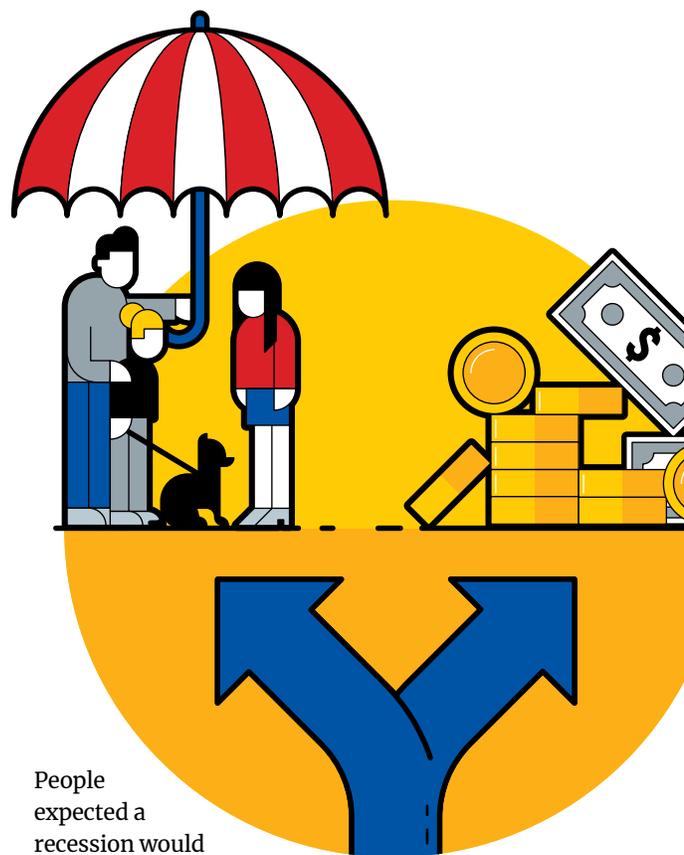
In the leadup to the last recession in 2008, people took out loans they couldn't pay back—they were hoping housing prices would continue to rise so they could take more equity out of their real estate investments. When the housing market went down, many Americans were in big trouble. The effects rippled out to the financial sector and later to non-homeowners.

The financial institutions that survived did not lend money easily, and non-financial businesses had difficulties funding their operations. Many businesses had to either shut down or downsize, which led to a decrease in the demand for labor and an increase in unemployment. The housing bubble exploded at the end of the George W. Bush administration, in the fall of 2008, and Barack Obama essentially continued the policies to minimize the effects of the recession that started in the previous administration.

Both administrations' approaches were to increase spending on infrastructure and services to stimulate the economy. This is called expansionary fiscal policy. The government did not do this during the Great Depression, and that's one reason it became a depression—a prolonged and deep recession.

Shortly after the 2008 recession ended, the president was a Democrat (Obama) while Congress was controlled by Republicans (starting in January 2011). The White House pushed to limit a tax cut issued by the previous administration and Congress objected. Policy landed in the middle: The tax cut continued, but the White House negotiated an increase in social services (especially unemployment benefits). Later, Republicans controlled both the White House and Congress (after the 2016 election), and the government generally limited social services and decreased taxes (in a way that disproportionately benefited higher-income workers in areas with low state and local taxes).

Looking into recent history, the evidence shows that on average, every nine years, we've experienced a recession. The last one we had was in 2008 and the one before that was in 2001.



People expected a recession would happen in 2019, but it didn't. The market was booming; the economy was growing; the stock market was doing very, very well.

The severity of this pandemic was not expected, and it will most likely lead to a recession. Hopefully not a major recession, but regardless, we economists know how to deal with it—expansionary fiscal policy. The two major parties in the United States would both, for the most part, handle a crash like this the same way. What leaders are doing today is very similar to what they did in 2008 and 2001. The government is spending a lot of money, and that will cause increased debt we'll have to pay in the future.

Once the economy stabilizes, we can expect to see how the parties differ in terms of dealing with a debt like this one. The Democrats would likely approach it by increasing taxes, mostly on the wealthy and on businesses. With this money, they would invest in projects and in "transfer payments," things like Social Security, Medicare or unemployment benefits—money that people get without providing any services. So it's not really stimulating the economy, but it's improving equality. Most Republicans believe in stimulating the economy by decreasing taxes, mostly on the wealthy and businesses, and decreasing government spending and intervention. They call this "free market." They want the government to leave markets to operate by themselves.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

The Expert: Rich Niesenbaum, professor of biology and director of sustainability studies

The scientific evidence for the warming of our global climate as a result of human activity is unequivocal. Global temperatures have risen by 1.62 degrees Fahrenheit since the late 19th century, with most of this warming taking place in the last 35 years. Increasing accumulation of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere has driven this change, and human activity (the burning of fossil fuels, factory farm operations and deforestation) has driven that accumulation of gases.

Evidence indicates that there are already severe economic consequences from the damage costs of climate change and that these will increase over time. Examples include increased drought and associated agricultural losses, intensifying catastrophic weather events and increased flooding from rising sea levels (between one and four feet by 2100). Climate change will also harm human health through extreme heat and as the distribution and range of pathogens and the animals that carry them expand. The depletion and contamination of water supplies and malnutrition and hunger with crop loss are already having devastating impacts and will continue to worsen.

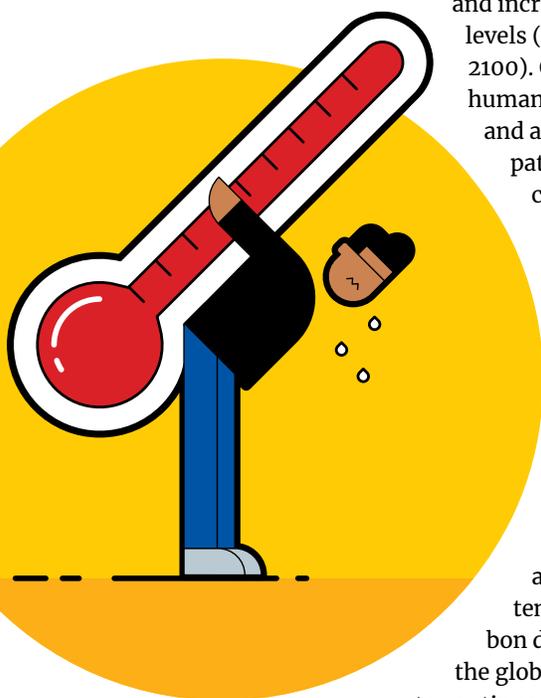
We have seen significant reductions in carbon emissions with COVID-19 due to decreased demand for energy and transportation. One analysis showed that coronavirus temporarily reduced China's carbon dioxide release by 25 percent. If the global trends we are now seeing were to continue, we could cut emissions below levels needed to meet the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius well before the 2030 deadline. Although current changes are temporary, they offer hope that there is potential to significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions. If we could achieve permanent reductions through true, sustainable climate

solutions, the positive impact on climate would be enormous.

Several barriers have limited the United States' ability to implement climate solutions. These have included government subsidies of fossil fuels, the financial influence of fossil fuel companies on politicians and an overall disregard of science, which have converged to create a direct assault on most efforts to protect the environment and deal with our changing climate. It is important to recognize that in the past, when environmental regulations have been enacted in the U.S., they have resulted in improved environmental and human health outcomes while promoting economic growth. For example, the Clean Air Act, passed in 1970, reduced air pollution and created market opportunities in the development of new emissions technology. Studies have shown that the direct economic benefits of regulation through the Clean Air Act far exceeded compliance costs and will continue to do so in the future.

There is even a larger economic potential associated with policies dealing with climate change. Many see an opportunity for disruptive innovation via new technologies such as carbon capture, renewable energy sources and crop varieties that can cope with the changing climate. In addition, we are seeing the potential of more sustainable economic models, including the shift from a linear model of resource use to a circular economy. This is already happening in places like Denmark, where buildings are being constructed out of materials from abandoned buildings. This decreases the carbon footprint of new construction by as much as 70 percent. The current economic crisis will require government investment to support new businesses, job creation and economic growth. Investing in businesses and projects that work toward climate change solutions is essential for the wellbeing of people and our planet.

The U.S. is the only developed country refusing to enact new policies to reduce global climate change. We need to remove the barriers that are slowing our transition to renewable energy and encourage development of technologies that will allow us to both mitigate and adapt to an already changing climate.



HOW TO NAVIGATE THE MEDIA

By Sara Vigneri, lecturer of media & communication



Go beyond the headline. The purpose of a headline is to grab your attention, which means the headline is more simplified and possibly more shocking than the actual article (and usually not written by the journalist who wrote the story—editors usually write headlines). An article's content is often more nuanced than the headline, so avoid sharing or reacting until you've read the article.

Verify the news outlet. There is no licensing or accreditation for journalism—anyone can do it. And while it's a good idea to get news from a variety of sources, you should ask a few questions first. Who owns this news company? How do they get their funding? Are they a nonprofit or a

mega-corporation? And if you can't find the answers to these questions, be cautious. News organizations should be transparent about their funding sources.

Who are the experts? Journalists working on quick deadlines often scramble to find sources for that perfect quote or soundbite, relying more on a willingness to play ball than expertise. When hot takes on controversial topics come up this election season, focus on who is speaking as an expert and question if they are an actual authority or an easy sound bite. And if an article has no sources or experts cited at all, be cautious.

Beware your confirmation bias. We all have our steadfast beliefs and tend to seek or accept information that confirms them: It's called confirmation bias, and

it's why misinformation around a heated presidential election spreads so easily. Tricksters know what fires us up and feed us tall tales that we can't help but share on social media. So if you read something that immediately gets you riled up, pause and ask yourself if it's feeding your confirmation bias and then go back through the first three tips.

Quantity does not equal quality. Just because you see something repeated all over social media or mentioned on every cable news channel doesn't mean it's true. When news is breaking, journalists may rush to mention something that hasn't been verified. If it's outrageous, shocking and too wild to be true, there's a good chance it isn't.

SENATE RACES TO WATCH

Director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion and Professor of Political Science Chris Borick analyzes which seats are most likely to be in the news in the leadup to November.

Susan Collins, Maine

Collins is the last New England Republican senator and is seeking reelection for a fifth term. As one of the most centrist Republicans in Congress, Collins has regularly been in the national spotlight as a swing vote. Her votes against the removal of President Trump during the impeachment trial and to confirm the nomination of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh have made her a top target for Democrats. Her opponent, Maine House Speaker Sara Gideon, has raised a considerable amount of money and has polled well against Collins early in 2020.

Cory Gardner, Colorado

Gardner is another GOP incumbent who is highly vulnerable in 2020. In a state that has become progressively more Democratic during the last decade, Gardner is seeking a second term in the Senate. Former Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper secured the Democratic party's nomination in late June. Hickenlooper was very popular as governor and is a favorite to win this race and help Democrats reach their goal of retaking the Senate.

Doug Jones, Alabama

Jones is the most vulnerable Democratic senator in the 2020 election cycle. He won a special election in 2017 over

controversial Republican candidate Roy Moore, making him the only Democrat to hold a Senate seat in the "Deep South." In one of the most conservative states in the nation, it will be a major challenge for Jones to hold on to his seat. In a run-off election in mid-July, former Auburn University football coach Tommy Tuberville decisively defeated former Senator and Attorney General Jeff Sessions. Tuberville is in a strong position to take this seat back for the GOP.

Martha McSally, Arizona

This Senate race is one of the most fascinating in the 2020 election cycle. In a state that has long been a Republican stronghold but that has been trending Democratic, Republican incumbent Martha McSally is seeking a return to the Senate. McSally was appointed to replace John McCain after the iconic senator's passing in 2018 and is now hoping to win a special election that will determine who will finish out the last two years of McCain's term. The likely Democratic nominee is Mark Kelly, a former astronaut and the husband of gun control activist and former Congresswoman Gabby Gifford. Kelly is a very strong challenger and well positioned to give Democrats a victory in Arizona.

Thom Tillis, North Carolina

North Carolina has emerged as one of the nation's premier political battlegrounds, and the 2020 Senate race there is poised to provide evidence of the political direction of this growing state and the nation as a whole. Republican incumbent Thom Tillis is a first-term senator who is seeking reelection in November. Tillis will be challenged by Democrat Cal Cunningham, a senator in the North Carolina legislature and colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. The early polls couldn't be tighter, and on election night, control of the Senate may come down to this key race.

Mitch McConnell, Kentucky

While it is fairly unlikely that Senate Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell will lose in his reelection bid this November, the race is drawing lots of national attention. McConnell is seeking a seventh term in the Senate, is very well financed and is running in solidly Republican Kentucky. However, he carries fairly high levels of disapproval within his home state, and his Democratic opponent, Amy McGrath, has matched him in fundraising in the early months of 2020. McGrath, a former Marine Corps fighter pilot, won a close primary in June and has polled well against McConnell in early matchups.



FOREIGN POLICY

The Expert: Chris Herrick, professor of political science

When the U.S. government and its citizens have tried to ignore foreign policy or distance the United States from an active role in international relations, as in the case of a failure to act proactively prior to World War II, the country has later paid dearly in lives and wealth. During the mid- and late 20th century, the United States played an active role in international relations, and that active role generally benefited both its security and its economic prosperity.

However, in the early 1950s, the United States government failed to heed the advice of trained foreign policy specialists, some of whom were fired when they accurately predicted the ineffectiveness of U.S. foreign policy in preventing the communist takeover of China. The resulting lack of expertise and fear of reprisal for telling the

truth lay the groundwork for problematic U.S. involvement in areas such as Vietnam.

Similarly, in the period after the collapse of the Soviet Union, U.S. foreign policy led the country to focus upon narrow security issues at the expense of a broader, less expansive and potentially more effective foreign policy.

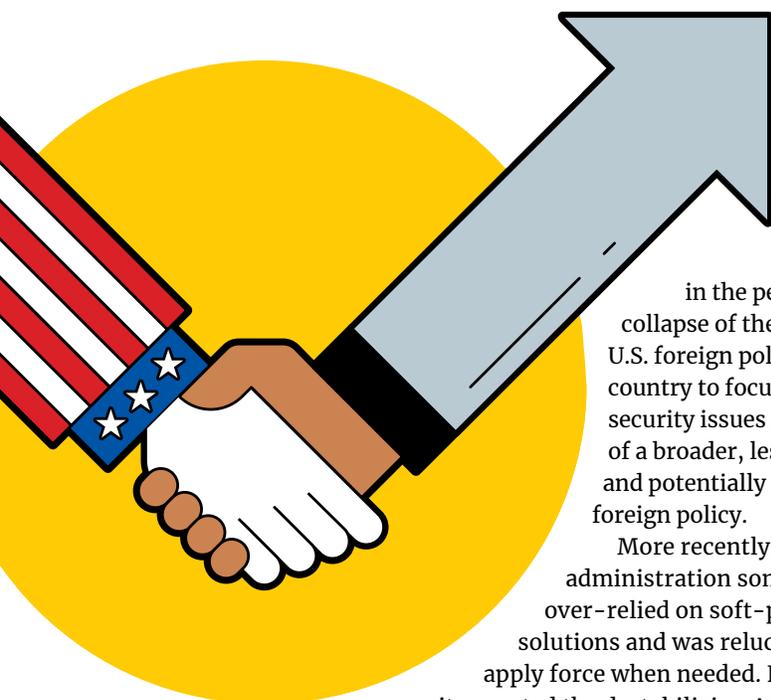
More recently, the Obama administration sometimes over-relied on soft-power solutions and was reluctant to apply force when needed. For example, it accepted the destabilizing Arab Spring, which created significant instability within the Middle East region. It failed to make good upon its redline threat regarding Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's use of chemical weapons, which was a major factor in the escalation

of the chaos in Syria and directly or indirectly led to an increase in Russian influence in the area.

However, the Donald Trump administration marked a significant retreat from leading international engagement. In addition, the Trump administration has failed to rely on the expertise of dedicated foreign policy professionals. This has led to a situation in which inconsistent U.S. foreign policy has effectively ignored a range of foreign policy issues critical to U.S. security and economic health and has yielded the initiative on many critical issues to China. Whether we as citizens like it or not, we will be affected by a wide range of international issues that can only be successfully addressed through cooperative international action in which the U.S. must be an active player.

Going forward, U.S. foreign policy must address traditional national security concerns, such as military attacks on the United States and/or its interests overseas. However, it must balance these concerns with other issues that can be equally devastating to the U.S. population. COVID-19 has demonstrated some of the significant problems of overemphasizing narrow security and economic concerns while ignoring the potential negative political, economic and social effects of the existing international economic system. These negative effects include environmental degradation, overemphasis upon supply chains tied to a single country, economic and social inequalities and unsustainable development, which create conditions ripe for social and political conflict, both domestically and internationally.

Addressing these problems will require significant, cooperative international action. Citizen support for a revitalized and creative foreign policy is vital if we are to reestablish trust and cooperation with traditional allies and increase engagement with a range of other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America in order to successfully address these and other vital foreign policy issues.



RACIAL JUSTICE

The Expert: Emanuela Kucik, assistant professor of English and Africana studies and co-director of Africana studies

While racial injustice is one of the most pressing issues in the United States right now, it is not a new issue. In fact, the country was built on racialized violence against Indigenous peoples and African populations. Enslaved people were brutalized and deemed objects, and early police patrols were established to catch slaves who had escaped. After emancipation, Black Codes kept Black populations in subordinate positions. Black people were often arrested and fined for vagrancy and pushed into imprisonment and/or the convict leasing system, which required them to work in horrific conditions.

These systems preceded the Jim Crow era. Jim Crow laws mandated segregation, and the racist philosophy behind them encouraged violence. Lynchings were prevalent and often attended by large groups of white people. Segregation denied Black Americans access

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT
OVERTURNED JIM CROW LAWS,
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COMMUNITIES REMAINS.

to building wealth, particularly through homeownership. In the 2019 article "Systemic Inequality: Displacement, Exclusion and Segregation," the authors explain that, for the majority of the 20th century, "households of color were systematically excluded from federal homeownership programs, and government officials largely stood by as predatory lenders stripped them of wealth and stability."

The Civil Rights Movement overturned Jim Crow laws, but the massive wealth gap between Black and white communities remains. In a recent *Washington Post* piece, historian Calvin Schermerhorn noted that "in 1863, Black Americans owned one-half of 1 percent of the national wealth. Today it's just over 1.5 percent for roughly the same percentage of the overall population." This wealth gap is maintained through a variety of institutions, including the criminal justice system, which plays a central role in limiting the prosperity and freedom of Black people. According to the NAACP, Black



Americans are incarcerated at more than five times the rate of whites overall, and, while Black and white Americans have similar rates of drug use, the imprisonment rate for drug charges is almost six times higher for Black Americans than for whites.

In addition to grappling with overpolicing and mass incarceration, Black neighborhoods today are often devoid of grocery stores and healthy food. Also, they are often sites of environmental racism, which includes the prevalence of toxic waste sites and polluted, lead-tainted water (as in Flint, Michigan). These factors, and a lack of access to health care, produce higher rates of chronic health issues in Black communities that have contributed to devastating death rates from COVID-19. According to a May article in *Annals of Epidemiology*, "nearly 22 percent of U.S. counties are disproportionately Black and they accounted for 52 percent of COVID-19 diagnoses and 58 percent of COVID-19 deaths nationally."

The aforementioned racist systems have produced an anti-Black hierarchy that has been violently reproduced for centuries, but there are signs of support for change. While Black Lives Matter was originally seen as a fringe group by many Americans, 52 percent of registered voters in a recent Civiqs poll reported support for the movement, up from 38 percent three years prior. Activists are calling for multifaceted solutions that include shifting funding away from militarizing police departments and toward improving public school systems, hospitals and healthy food options in Black neighborhoods.

INCOME INEQUALITY

The Expert: Lufei Teng, assistant professor of economics

As 2020 began, the United States closed out its 11th year of economic expansion since the 2008 financial crisis ended. Overall wealth grew during this period, but that did not leave all groups better off financially. According to U.S. Census Bureau data, in the last decade (and in those that preceded it), incomes have remained the most stagnant for the poorest households while increasing the most for the richest (see table, below).

While the number of people living beneath the poverty threshold in 2018 decreased by 1.4 million from the previous year, the damage caused by COVID-19 is likely to drag many back into poverty. With nearly zero savings, low-income families are the most vulnerable group in any kind of crisis.

Income inequality isn't just about wealth. It creates unequal access to education, medical services, political power ... almost everything. The pandemic has highlighted these inequities. For example,

many lower-income workers (at grocery stores, in meatpacking plants) have been deemed essential amid COVID-19. By going to work, these employees run the risk of getting sick, but many can't afford to stay home.

Many other lower-income workers

(in restaurants and retail) are simply out of work, falling even further behind. It's mostly white-collar workers,

who tend to have better-paying jobs, who are able to work from home and therefore preserve their economic advantages.

Suggestions to decrease income inequality generally fall into two categories: more government transfers to the poor (via programs like unemployment compensation and food assistance) and more taxes on the rich.

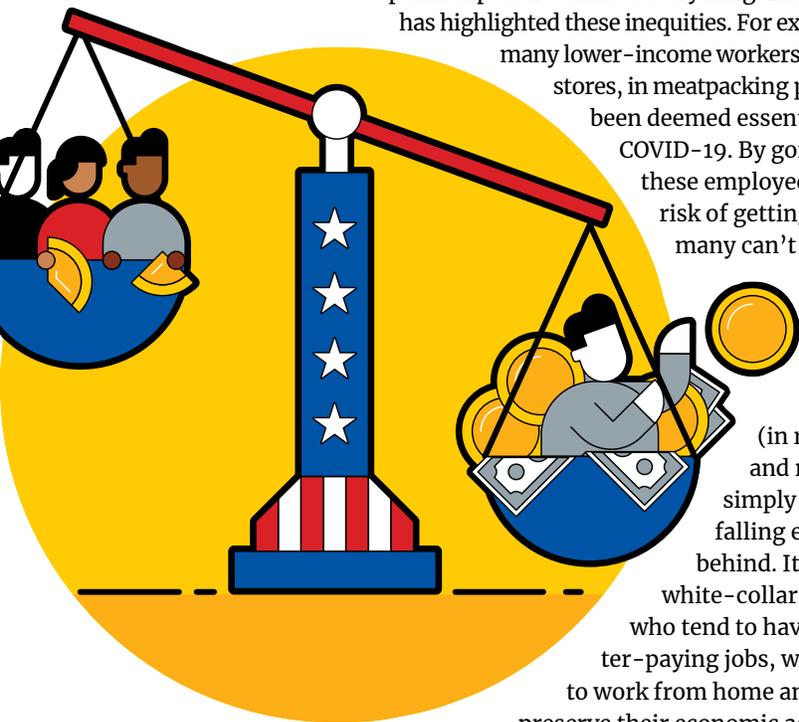
When it comes to transfers, consider that the federal government has been running a budget

deficit for years. It reached its peak at nearly \$1 trillion in 2019, 4.6 percent of the total GDP. The treasury plans to borrow another \$2.2 trillion to stimulate recovery from COVID-19. Borrowing more today means a heavier burden tomorrow. Last year, income security, Medicare and Social Security benefits together accounted for 40.8 percent of the total federal budget. Military expenses, the next largest category, made up 15.3 percent. And 8.5 percent was spent on the interest costs of borrowing.

A responsible government should allocate its limited resources to where they are needed. Funding education is one example—education is often regarded as the best way to improve social mobility. Another is funding for public health. More funding for infrastructure would improve public services and boost employment. But is our government willing to cut military spending and reduce its debt burden to meet those needs?

The strategy to tax the rich should not be simply imposing higher income tax rates. Due to policies enacted after the last recession, capital (return on investments like stocks and bonds) has been accumulating at a faster rate than fundamental economic growth. Therefore, people with financial assets have been able to amass fortunes much faster than salaried laborers. Salaried work rewards a person for skills, education and experience. Capital gain just happens, and unfair privileges (like access to information or cheap borrowing costs) often affect return.

When a country fails to offer equal access to education and health care to a portion of its workforce, that decreases the overall quality and productivity of its workforce. Maximizing growth requires ensuring that as many people as possible are able to access these critical services.



MEAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

(Adjusted for inflation into 2018 dollars):	1988	1998	2008	2018
Lowest Quintile (20%)	13,231	14,241	13,628	13,775
Second Quintile	33,393	35,958	34,510	37,293
Third Quintile	55,851	60,167	58,611	63,572
Fourth Quintile	84,426	93,054	93,251	101,570
Highest Quintile	161,179	196,911	199,990	233,895

TRADE

The Expert: Art Raymond, professor of economics and finance

In two surveys of economists' views on economic issues and policies, the statement that produced the most agreement was, "Tariffs [taxes on imported goods] and import quotas [quantity limits on imported goods] reduce general economic welfare." In both surveys, more than 90 percent of the economists who responded either agreed with the statement or agreed with provisions.

Economists generally argue that trade, in the long run, produces a net overall benefit, so nations should promote rather than inhibit

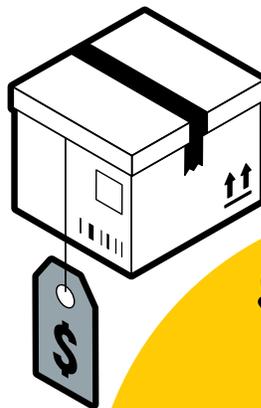
ECONOMISTS GENERALLY ARGUE THAT TRADE, IN THE LONG RUN, PRODUCES A NET OVERALL BENEFIT, SO NATIONS SHOULD PROMOTE RATHER THAN INHIBIT TRADE.

trade. Consistent with that view, many nations have reduced tariffs, import quotas and other trade barriers since World War II through multilateral negotiations. In 1931, world tariff rates averaged almost 60 percent. By 2016, the average tariff rate fell to about 3 percent. The multilateral negotiations that led to falling tariff rates and other trade barriers originated in the post-WWII General

Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). GATT evolved into the current World Trade Organization (WTO), which came into existence in 1995.

A central principle of the WTO is contained in the most-favored-nation clause, which states that Nation A may not impose a tariff on one nation that is higher than the lowest tariff that Nation A imposes on any other nation. The purpose is to avoid discrimination and the lack of coordination that can occur when one nation imposes a tariff on another that is met by a retaliatory tariff and further escalation. There are exceptions to the clause, but its application has been effective in reducing tariffs among nations until very recently.

Beginning in 2018, the Trump administration initiated a series of unilaterally imposed tariffs against long-standing trading partners of the U.S. The administration justified the tariffs in the name of national security. There are no explicit penalties to violating the most-favored-nation clause, but potential repercussions include the



erosion of trust and confidence and the use of retaliatory tariffs by other nations. If such violations become pervasive enough, the WTO becomes nonfunctional.

While the tariffs can benefit some U.S. firms, they produce a number of costs to U.S. citizens and other firms. Tariffs increase the price of imported goods to U.S. citizens, and as domestic goods replace them, the price of domestic goods increases as well. The Congressional Budget Office estimates the cost of the tariffs to the average family to be \$1,277 in 2020. Tariffs also increase the cost of imported resources that are used to make U.S. goods. A tariff on steel, for example, makes U.S. auto production costlier and therefore less competitive on the world market.

Additionally, as history suggests, nations retaliate against tariffs by imposing their own tariffs. Perhaps as important, tariffs strain international relations between valuable allies. As of this writing, the world is currently under the physical, emotional and economic strain of COVID-19. Even in good times, the reduction of tariffs would be beneficial. It's especially important in these difficult times. A reduction in tariffs would reduce the cost of goods to American families, reduce the cost of imported resources to U.S. manufacturers and foster mutual cooperation among allies in a time when international collaboration is crucial.

ALUMNI NEWS

From the Volunteer Coordinator



Every year, there are hundreds of alumni who volunteer to support programs at Muhlenberg that simply would not happen without their efforts and dedication. Students would not go on Career Center Road Trips or participate in the shadow program without alumni willing to coordinate and sponsor these experiences. There would be no groups to toast Muhlenberg during THAW without the alumni who plan the events. Without volunteers, there would be less outreach and class giving for reunions and fewer regional events. And who would greet incoming students and their families at first-year move-in, or speak in classrooms during Alumni Week? Simply put, a student's experience at Muhlenberg is significantly enriched because of the contributions of our volunteers.

Some of our volunteers visit campus several times a year for board and committee meetings. Others show up from a distance by talking with students about their careers over the phone and via email. All of our volunteers have one thing in common: a willingness to help their fellow Mules.

Because one of my responsibilities is to create a comprehensive volunteer program, I have learned that, beyond those who directly support the Office of Advancement, many volunteers orchestrate their work via athletics, fraternity and sorority life, the Office of Housing & Residence Life, the Office of Multicultural Life and more.

Thank you to all of our alumni volunteers for supporting students, keeping alumni connected, driving philanthropic participation and so much more. Your service is an inspiration to future generations who will continue to give back. You lead by example and continue to raise the bar of excellence. Go Mules!

Diana Skowronski Tirendi '07

Senior Associate Director, Alumni Affairs

Reunion Volunteer Awards

"Volunteering for Muhlenberg allows me to reconnect with lifelong friends while helping to make our alma mater continuously stronger and better."

Mitch Goldblatt '79, 40th Reunion Chair

"This award goes to all of the members of the Class of 1959 who were able to attend. Without their commitment and support, there would be no award."

Lee Kreidler '59, 60th Reunion Co-Chair

"In our case, for a group of mostly 82-year-olds, having nearly 25 percent of the class turn out was very rewarding."

Ed Meyer '59, 60th Reunion Co-Chair

The Muhlenberg Network Volunteer Award

"One of the biggest takeaways from my time at Muhlenberg was that everyone always looked out for one another—consistently creating new opportunities and providing support for each other in unexpected ways."

Phil Haas '05

W. Chester Hill 1920 Leadership by a Class Fund Chair Award

"Through my classmates and other Muhlenberg alumni, I have a strong sense of having an extended family."

Bruce Albright '74

General Pete Award

"The level of commitment all levels of administration have in being stewards of the Muhlenberg brand is amazing."

Nick Tranguich '02

Young Alumni Volunteer Award

"Even now, as an alum, I am still constantly feeling supported by other Mules. It's the gift that keeps on giving!"

Casie Ropski '17

Volunteer Leadership Service Award

"I have always been proud to name Muhlenberg as my alma mater and couldn't be happier to watch its reputation for quality expand and grow."

John Trainer '65

**Hear From the
2020 Volunteer
Award Winners**

For more information on each awardee, visit muhlenbergconnect.com/volawards.

Inside the Alumni Board

Some of the most dedicated alumni volunteers serve as members of the Muhlenberg College Alumni Board. Its 28 current members hail from a range of class years, from 1965 to 2014. Alumni Board President Carol Ekizian Papazian '79, who is in her third term on the board, says members commit to attending College events and four board meetings per year and supporting the College philanthropically. Each member also participates on one of six committees (right).

While that sounds pretty structured, the work they do is actually very interactive and fun, Papazian says. "We are not in a bubble—we are working with the staff and the students and with other alumni, too."

Alumni Board members find that close collaboration with College administration, the Career Center, Class Fund Chairs, the Young Alumni Council, student organizations, professors and families enriches their volunteer experience. The core of this collaborative work is accomplished at the committee level. The board's six committees were developed to help students, staff and faculty strengthen connections with alumni.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS COMMITTEE

Members select, from alumni nominated by their peers, individuals to receive Alumni Achievement Awards who have made significant contributions in their fields of expertise while upholding the highest standards and value in everything they do.

"It's interesting to find out where people are and their journey, the different opportunities and what you can do. There is no limit."

—JILL STETZ-LEWIS '89, ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS COMMITTEE CHAIR



ALUMNI TRUST FUND COMMITTEE

Members oversee the Alumni Trust Fund, review funding requests and report to the Alumni Board on expenditures.

"The interest generated by the Alumni Trust Fund has funded, among other things, capital development, important student initiatives and innovative projects."

—MICHAEL YELLIN '06, ALUMNI BOARD TREASURER



CAREER SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members work directly to support the initiatives and programs of the Career Center. They also created a program that provides stipends for a select group of students who wish to pursue low- or non-paying summer internships.

"I wanted to join the board because I had already been volunteering my time with theatre students—being a bridge between the College experience and being an artist and entertainer."

—DANA IANNUZZI '03, CAREER SERVICES COMMITTEE CHAIR



DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members work directly with front-line fundraising staff to support and promote all fundraising initiatives and personally thank alumni for their philanthropic support of the College.

"Muhlenberg is a special place, and it created where I am today. I am passionate about 'creating a culture of philanthropy.'"

—MIKE DANIELS '96, DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR



ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Members seek to strengthen the connection between the College and alumni by encouraging alumni participation in events and programs, conducting one-on-one outreach and surveys and providing valuable feedback to the College on alumni attitudes and perceptions.

"A recent survey told us that younger alumni are busy with their families, friends and favorite charities. We are now focusing on encouraging those who have not been engaged."

—SAMI UNGER HORROW '10, ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR



NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Members recommend changes to and ensure adherence to the Alumni Board bylaws and working resolutions. They also oversee the nominations process, including compiling the slate of officers and general representatives.

"We are exploring ways to develop remote participation. It would be great to have people from other parts of the country and not be limited by where they live."

—JASON FINKELSTEIN '06, NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR



For more information about the Alumni Board or how to get involved, contact bergalum@muhlenberg.edu.

Muhlenberg Is More Than Our Campus—It's Our People

Physical distance has not stopped our College community from thriving.

BY PRESIDENT KATHLEEN E. HARRING



For more than 100 years, the president of Muhlenberg has lived in a College-owned house on campus. Bordered by fraternities, sororities and an upper-class residence hall, the house in use today is situated along the route many students take to class and back to their College homes. Since March 14, when students left campus due to the COVID-19 crisis, the pedestrian traffic has nearly disappeared. When I look out my window these days, I'll occasionally see a lone student walking across the Gordon Street parking lot, holding her take-out meal from the dining hall. While other traffic has continued—a campus safety vehicle routinely patrols the streets; essential plant operations staff occasionally

drive by in their carts—our campus is a different environment than it was just a few months ago.

On my evening walks, the campus, in all its verdant splendor, provides a respite from Zoom meetings and conference calls. I'm reminded of the value of being present in the moment and cherishing the sounds and places that make our campus so special: the alma mater playing at 6 p.m. from the bell tower. A robin sitting on a table in Parents Plaza. The smell of flowering bushes as I walk down Academic Row. The early evening light reflecting off the Trexler Pavilion. The bright green of the football turf. Victor's Lament standing as a beacon on the College Green. A squirrel scampering up a tree—perhaps *the* Muhlenberg Squirrel?

Although our campus is quiet, our College is buzzing with activity. As I draft this message, classes are ending for the spring semester, a time we all will remember as extraordinary. Faculty are holding classes and virtual hours for students. Students are submitting final papers, presenting honors theses and meeting in virtual study groups to prepare for finals. Committees are Zooming. Staff are organizing end-of-year celebrations and finalizing Virtual Senior Days. All of this is being done from a distance, but it all is being done together.

The educational experience for our students continues. Relationships are maintained and nurtured. And it is those personal relationships, as Dan Chambliss concludes in *How College Works*, that are the foundation for student success and powerful outcomes. Our physical spaces serve as cues for our shared memories, shared values and shared commitments. Those memories, values and commitments, however, are deeply rooted in our Muhlenberg relationships. It is the relationships between professor and student; between mentor and mentee; between roommates, lab partners, team members, alumni and colleagues that form the foundation of the Muhlenberg experience. And those relationships continue to deepen even at a time when we are apart from one another. Our relationships change us. They make us better thinkers, better doers, better friends and partners, better employees and managers and better citizens.

Muhlenberg's strength is our community and our deep commitment to one another. Our people make our College great—whether on campus or on Zoom. I am grateful that each of you is a member of the Muhlenberg family. 

ALUMNI WEEKEND ON DEMAND

CELEBRATING
REUNION
CLASSES

1960,
'65,
'70,
'75,
'80,
'85,
'90,
'95,
2000,
'05,
'10,
'15
AND
'20

OCTOBER 2-4, 2020

This year, Muhlenberg comes to you no matter where you are, no planes, trains or automobiles required. Just a computer or phone, Wi-Fi and the desire to reconnect.

Registration information coming soon.

All of the programs that you know and love will be available, including classes by Muhlenberg faculty, family activities for your mini-Mules, the alumni art show, campus tours and more!

For more information and program updates, visit
muhlenbergconnect.com/alumniweekend or call 800-464-2374.



2020 Caps and Grads

Top to bottom, left to right: cap by Jona Lieberman '20, Brooke Weber '20, cap by Emily Layden '20, Naomi Solnick '20, Levelle Arnold '20, cap by Esther Schlossberg '20, Michael Civitano '20, cap by Jazlyn White '20