

Millersville University

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Dec.
2023

As we prepare to celebrate the holidays with family and friends, this is an appropriate time to take stock of our blessings. Judith and I are grateful to be part of the Millersville community and enriched by the many individuals who make our university a special place.

During the fall semester, we celebrated the accomplishments of our students, cheered their victories, and marveled at their talents. And we came together at sorrowful moments to share grief and loss and to confront the challenges facing our community, nation and world. Sharing these moments is an integral trait of fostering a caring and compassionate community. This is what it means to be a member of the Ville.

As you approach the holiday break, I encourage you to take some time to cherish the magnificent sights and sounds of the joyous season with family and friends. Of equal importance, is to find moments of quiet reflection and rest during this busy time of year. Truth be told, I hope to take my own advice and find a similar level of balance and serenity over the break.

In this edition of the monthly newsletter, you can read about our recent commencement exercises and a new program to re-engage former Millersville students who are interested in an opportunity to complete their studies and earn their degrees. We celebrate one of our talented students who is making a difference in promoting environmental justice and we meet the two new voices behind the microphone for women's volleyball.

As 2023 concludes, I look forward to an upcoming year of shared success and collective progress to move our university forward.

Judith and I extend our sincerest wishes to you and your loved ones for a happy and healthy holiday season. I look forward to seeing you in 2024!



DECEMBER GRADUATION

A highlight for me this month was our Winter Commencement. We welcomed nearly 2,000 graduates and guests to Pucillo Gymnasium on December 9th. Across our four colleges, more than 400 students were eligible to walk.

Our keynote speaker was alumna Jennifer Craighead Carey '90, a partner/attorney at Barley Snyder.

Student Government President Camree Patterson shared the following advice. "The pandemic significantly impacted our college experience. We did not receive the stereotypical college experiences, like attending orientation and engaging in Millersville traditions... This experience made us more resilient, driven, and appreciative individuals... We learned how we can lean on others to support one another in hard times. These experiences may not have been the typical college experience we all thought we would have, but I challenge you to find the positives in every experience."

You can [watch a recap of the ceremony here](#).

REUP EDUCATION PARTNERS WITH MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY

ReUp Education, a leading tech-enabled provider empowering adult learners, has announced a new partnership with Millersville University. As part of ReUp's work with the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, the new partnership highlights Millersville University's and ReUp's commitments to help stop outs and adult learners enroll and graduate as part of their journey to pursue economic and social mobility in a 21st century economy. In this partnership, ReUp will bring a unique combination of technology, data, and personalized one-on-one coaching to Millersville University and support its mission of providing learners with a supporting and enriching environment as they pursue a professional education.

As of 2020, 35 percent of learners were over the age of 25, according to data from [National Center for Education Statistics \(NCES\)](#). However, adult learners still have lower completion rates than their younger peers, often due to a wide range of barriers that include time scarcity, childcare, financial constraints and more. Completing a college degree has profound impacts on social and economic mobility. Those with a [degree](#) are half as likely to be unemployed as those with a high school diploma and demonstrate significantly higher levels of happiness, health, and community involvement.



Since 2015, ReUp has been helping higher-ed institutions engage, enroll, and support adult learners. Leveraging patented technology and one-on-one personalized coaching services, ReUp's approach will help Millersville University reach learners who have previously put a pause on their education. This partnership will provide

Millersville University learners with specialized holistic support from ReUp that considers the key factors that impact a learner's decision to re-enroll and their unique journey toward earning their degree.

"Partnering with ReUp will allow Millersville University to address the inequities that students who must stop out of their degree program face, including higher unemployment and lower wages," explains Dr. Daniel A. Wubah, President of Millersville University. "This partnership will allow those students to finish their degrees and enter into the workforce with stronger support."

As part of the partnership, ReUp will also serve as an expert on adult learners for Millersville University, offering institution-specific insights and strategic recommendations based on industry trends, millions of data points on adult learners, and direct learner feedback.

"As a former adult learner, I know only too well the challenges that face other adult learners as they pursue a degree. Time, money, and a support system are all crucial elements of a learner's journey through higher ed, yet for too many of these degree-seekers, these factors are massive barriers to completion," said Terah Crews, CEO of ReUp. "Through our new partnership with Millersville University, we are helping expand the support and resources available for adult learners, helping to make the rollercoaster ride of higher education just a little less turbulent."

NEW WETI FELLOW NAMED

The Millersville University Watershed Education Training Institute recently named its newest recipient of the Environmental Justice Fellowship award. The year-long fellowship was awarded to Reeshika Pokhrel, a sophomore with an allied health technology major and a concentration in medical lab science.

As a WETi fellow, Pokhrel is getting ready to begin a few projects. Some of the projects that the institute is considering include planting trees near the biology pond, installing rain barrels around campus and posting informative signages around campus.



"I feel really fortunate to have gotten this position to be a WETi Environmental Justice fellow; it has been a great learning experience so far," says Pokhrel. "I have gotten to learn a lot about WETi and how our campus is part of it."

In addition to being a student and now a WETi fellow, Pokhrel is a refugee from Nepal. Her family moved to the United States in 2011, and prior to her time in Lancaster, she lived in New Hampshire until she moved in 2020.

Pokhrel is also involved with other organizations on campus. "I am involved with [RIDGE](#), it stands for Refugees and Immigrants Devoted to Growth and Excellence," she explains. "It's a new club that was started last year, and I'm the current vice president."

The Millersville University Watershed Education Training Institute provides a variety of watershed conservation programs for people of all ages and backgrounds. These include on-campus and off-campus collaborators, like the Stroud Water Research Center, Pennsylvania State Parks and many more.

The mission of WETi is to foster watershed stewardship and student/faculty research for the region through science-based programs while training and educating others of all backgrounds.

"I am really looking forward to doing projects around campus," concludes Pokhrel. "Being part of WETi, I hope that I am able to share what I have learned with others as well."

NETWORK UPGRADE UPDATE

In early 2021, Millersville University was the target of a cyberattack. In the wake of the attack, the University engaged with law enforcement and global security experts to conduct a forensic investigation into the nature of the attack. Following the cyberattack, MU set out to update out-of-date network hardware and modernize our network security and administration. I'm pleased to report that the two-year network upgrade has been completed.

- Phase 1 was the replacement of the campus firewalls and transitioning to current industry standard network security. That was completed in January of 2022.
- Phase 2, the complete upgrade of the academic buildings' wired and wireless networks, was completed after finals this December 2023.



"I'm extremely proud of our IT team," says Josh Hartranft, Interim Chief Technology Officer. "They worked together with the campus community to make these upgrades a reality in a timely manner. Together, we have overcome challenges and embraced opportunities for growth. I am confident that the spirit of collaboration will propel us to even greater achievements in the upcoming year."

The benefits of the upgrade include:

- Improved efficiency and increased internal capacity while vastly improving security.
- Upgraded equipment capable of running the latest software and improved security and administration.
- Installed 600 new Wi-Fi 6 hotspots and 230 new switches – the newest Wi-Fi standard for faster connectivity and additional users.
- Converged phone and data networks, reducing the total number of switches.
- Reclaimed unused network ports as more devices moved to Wi-Fi (reduced the number of switches).
- Enhanced the refresh schedule to ensure we can support the latest technology.

Next up for IT? If you've received a new laptop to replace your old desktop, you have likely gotten notice that your old device will soon be collected by IT. Old devices will be collected over winter break, so please

leave them in your office. Some of the devices will be repurposed, with the remaining being sent to a recycling processing center.

NEW VOICES OF MILLERSVILLE WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Two familiar faces at Millersville University have found themselves in a new role.



Alum and retired professor Edward Rand and current Millersville University Police Chief Pete Anders have been announced as the new voices of Millersville Women's Volleyball.

Both Rand and Anders saw the call for the position in 'Ville Daily and advised the associate Athletic Director, Peg Kauffman, that they could help this season as needed. The need arose after the passing of long-time announcer Dr. Ralph (Doc Roc) Anttonen.

For more than 50 years, Dr. Ralph "Doc Roc" Anttonen was the man behind the microphone at men's basketball games and women's volleyball matches, becoming a legendary figure in the community and synonymous with Millersville Athletics events.

This is both Anders' and Rand's first time calling volleyball games. "I was a wrestler; coach Brian Smith and I wrestled for MU in the 80s," says Anders. "Two of my three daughters played high school and club volleyball, and my oldest played in college. Volleyball is a great spectator sport, and I love college athletics."

Anders has assisted in the past with scholastic wrestling, but this is a first for him with volleyball or for the 'Ville.

Rand's background is in baseball, basketball and swimming.

"I have announced several of my daughters' sporting events," says Rand. "With 51 years of teaching experience, I have no problem with public speaking."

With their love for Millersville sports and passion for supporting Millersville student-athletes, Kauffman thought they both were ideal candidates.

"I think Peg thought it would be funny," said Anders. "Seriously, fellow alum Ed Rand and I both love 'Ville sports and enjoy supporting our students."

Rand and Anders have agreed to split games in order to accommodate Anders' busy schedule.

"With Pete and I splitting the schedule, it works out great for me," says Rand. "I attend many Millersville sporting events even when I'm not working them."

A typical gameday will look different for both Anders and Rand.

"First, I give Judy 'Mama Roc' Anttonen a hug, the scorekeeper," says Anders. "I met Mama my freshman year 40 years ago, and it is a pleasure to sit with her at the table. I then check player name pronunciation with the visiting coach, check in with the officials and follow the script. I try to provide accurate announcements with a "Roll 'Ville" flavor."

"I usually arrive around an hour before the start," says Rand. "I haven't hugged Judy yet, but will have to start... I like to read over the script and check the correct pronunciation of many of the players' names, check with the coaches to finalize their team roster and meet with the officials to discuss what they expect from me and how they will manage the sporting event."

For all Millersville women's volleyball information and to listen to Anders and Rand on the call, [click here](#).