

Millersville University

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Feb.
2025

Reflecting on the past few winters at the 'Ville, we've enjoyed rather mild and stable weather. Unfortunately, the trend has turned, and the weather of the past two months has been less predictable and rapidly changing. Snowstorms, ice storms and bitter cold snaps have been the norm with a few mild days to provide some temporary relief. I must admit that I enjoy the view from Tanger House as our beautiful campus glistens with a fresh coating of morning snow.

Despite the cold weather, I have some heartwarming news. I'm delighted to share that earlier today it was announced that One Day Give surpassed \$1 million! This record-breaking amount was made possible by gifts from 2,413 donors. Thank you to everyone who participated in this extraordinary event that supports our students.

Over the past two weeks, I have written to campus to express my strong support for our EPPIIC values and my steadfast commitment to our educational mission. The national landscape continues to change rapidly, and we will continue to monitor all available information channels. As circumstances warrant, I will continue to update the campus with the best information available to me and my leadership team. In the meantime, I will remain focused on our students and ensuring their success and well-being.

To help prepare our campus for the future, the Strategic Advisory Council and the four planning teams are making excellent progress on drafting our 2025-30 strategic plan. The teams have prepared an excellent first draft of the strategic directions and goals for review and feedback. The SAC members are working through the next iteration of their work product and reaching out to stakeholders across campus to further refine their work. I am grateful to co-chairs Drs.' Marc Tomljanovich, Laura Granruth, Carol Runge, and members of the SAC for their dedication and passion to this critical undertaking.

In terms of buildings and facilities, several projects are gaining momentum. In the coming weeks, the campus will see construction begin on the exterior of Lombardo Hall, formerly known as Brooks Gym. This begins an exciting new phase for the project and builds on the ongoing interior work. The new HVAC units have arrived and been installed on the roof of Pucillo Gym with final implementation and testing in the weeks ahead. Finally, a revised plan for upgrades at Biemesderfer Stadium is underway and will result in much-needed modernization later this spring and summer.

I was thrilled to attend the recent Dress Red Luncheon hosted by our Employee Wellness Committee. Dr. Julie Lombardi, associate professor of Wellness and Sport Sciences offered an update on the importance of early detection, critical warning signs of heart attacks and strokes, and self-care. Dr.

Kelly Rotondo, assistant professor in The Wehrheim School of Nursing was our keynote speaker. She gave us a demonstration of how meditation can positively impact your overall health. I am grateful to Dr. Lombardi and the entire committee for their dedication to hosting this annual event.

Coming up next week I am looking forward to taking part in events during Black Heritage Month, particularly the Carter Woodson Lecture and various arts and cultural performances.

In this edition of my newsletter, you can learn more about recent events hosted on campus such as the School Superintendent's Breakfast and the Statewide Housing Policy Forum, as well as our Welcome Back Employee Breakfast. You can read about our first Noyce grant recipient, an interesting piece of history in our Library Archives, and catch up on Athletic news.

TREVOR WINTER: FIRST NOYCE GRANT RECIPIENT

Trevor Winter, a transfer student from Harrisburg Area Community College has made history at Millersville University as the first [recipient of the prestigious Noyce grant](#). Winter, who is pursuing a degree in physics education, will graduate in 2027 and is thrilled about the opportunities the grant provides.

Dr. Cynthia Taylor (left) and Dr. Nanette Dietrich (right) watch as Trevor Winter signs the scholarship papers.

"This grant is incredible. It means so much to me and my family," Winter shared. "It will not only help me achieve my dream of becoming a teacher but also allow me to pay off my car, which is a huge relief."



The Noyce grant is part of Millersville University's newly awarded Track 1:

Scholarships and Stipends Grant from the National Science Foundation, totaling \$1,199,953. This five-year initiative is designed to recruit and train 15 STEM majors to address the national shortage of highly effective secondary mathematics and science teachers.

Selected Noyce Scholars receive financial support covering 97% of tuition, fees, and room and board—equivalent to \$48,000 over two years. In return, they commit to teaching in high-need school districts such as those in Lancaster and York, both of which serve diverse and economically disadvantaged student populations.

A native of Hallam, Pennsylvania, Winter would love to stay in the York area to teach and bring his love of physics to life for students. "Physics is how everything works," says Winter. "It's fascinating to me to observe something and then say, let's go find out how it works."

"Millersville University is committed to addressing the critical shortage of STEM teachers in high-need schools," said Dr. Cynthia Taylor, professor of mathematics and Principal Investigator of the project. "Through the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program and our local partnerships, we aim to equip scholars with the skills to become effective, culturally competent educators."

Dr. Nanette Dietrich, professor of Educational Foundations and Co-Principal Investigator, highlighted the grant's broader benefits: "This is an incredible opportunity for students aspiring to teach grades 7-12. Along with the Noyce support, the state offers a \$10,000 stipend for student teaching. It's a fantastic time to enter the teaching profession!"

Students interested in applying for the Noyce Scholarship should contact Dr. Cynthia Taylor at cynthia.taylor@millersville.edu.

MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT MEETS WITH LOCAL SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS



Millersville University recently hosted a meeting with superintendents from local school districts to discuss education pipelines, teacher preparation, and partnerships that enhance K-12 and higher education connections. The meeting underscored the vital collaboration between Millersville University and local school districts in shaping the future of education and ensuring student success at every level.

During the meeting, I had the opportunity to provide the gathering with an update on university enrollment trends, highlighting positive developments in teacher education programs. We have witnessed a significant increase in Early Childhood Education majors, which have grown to 524 students this fall, marking a five-year high. Additionally, the Special Education major has seen a resurgence, with enrollment climbing from 52 students last year to 73 this year. Overall, the university's teacher education programs enrolled 1,177 students this fall, an increase of 25 from the previous year.

Millersville remains committed to recruiting and graduating exemplary teacher candidates and strengthening our partnerships across the region. Our innovative programs, which get students into real-world experiences earlier than many of our competitors, are a key strength.

Several university leaders shared updates on projects aimed at strengthening the PreK-12 environment.

- **Dual Enrollment and Early College Pipelines:** Dr. Gail Gasparich, provost and senior vice president, discussed collaborations with Penn Manor and McCaskey high schools, providing students with opportunities to earn college credits early.
- **Future Educator Pathways, Teacher Summer Institutes and Reflective Practitioner Courses:** Dr. Lara Willox, dean of the College of Education, highlighted efforts to inspire high school students to consider careers in education, particularly in high-need areas like Special

Education. She also outlined initiatives to support new teachers through advanced training and reflective practices.

Pennsylvania School Boards Association Partnership: Dr. Victor DeSantis, vice president for University Relations & Strategic Initiatives, detailed collaborations designed to address school leadership and policy needs, particularly around school safety and emergency preparedness.

MILLERSVILLE HOSTS POLICY FORUM ON HOUSING

Millersville University recently hosted a policy forum on the Commonwealth's housing shortage. The event was part of a state-wide listening tour featuring Cabinet-level officials from the Shapiro Administration.

I was honored to welcome the gathering and represent the Millersville University community. As I reported to the gathering, Lancaster County's high quality of life, economic vibrancy, and continued growth are driving strong interest in our region. I also emphasized the importance of keeping Millersville graduates and younger alumni in our region and the role that affordable housing can play.



Leading the forum were Secretary Rick Siger from the Department of Community and Economic Development, Secretary Valerie Arkoosh from the Department of Human Services, and Secretary Akbar Hossain from the Office of Policy and Planning.

DCED is tasked with presenting a draft of the Housing Action Plan to the Governor by September 12, 2025. The draft will outline strategic planning initiatives and policies to be executed over the next five years to effectively tackle the Commonwealth's housing shortage.

The Forum included over 35 participants representing the home building industry, county and municipal leaders, affordable housing advocates, planning experts, and more.

Among the topics addressed by participants were the lack of housing inventory, the age of the current housing stock, the rising costs of housing, regulatory, zoning, and other policy barriers, and the need for more public awareness.

The Governor's team seeks additional input from the public to identify barriers and craft solutions to the housing shortage. A website for providing feedback is available [here](#).

EMPLOYEE BREAKFAST A SUCCESS

On January 16, 2025, more than 250 faculty and staff enjoyed a delicious breakfast created and served by our own talented University Dining & Catering Services crew to celebrate the beginning of the spring semester.

Photos of the event, including pictures of our Skully's Circle Award presentation to Francis Ozuna Cedano, Financial Aid Counselor, can be found [here\(Requires login\)](#).

Thank you to the many attendees who donated food and other items to benefit the Campus Cupboard! According to Vicki Weber, Assistant Director of Campus Cupboard, donations increased from roughly 400 pounds donated in January 2024 to a little over 500 pounds donated in January 2025! Your generosity is appreciated and impactful for our students!



NATIONAL MONUMENT LINKED TO MILLERSVILLE HISTORICAL RESEARCH

In December the federal government established the Carlisle Federal Indian Boarding School National Monument in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The new national monument will tell the story of oppression endured by thousands of Native American children and their families at this site and the harmful legacy of the broader Indian boarding school system that the federal government operated and supported across the country for more than 150 years.



Thanks to collaborative student-faculty research, we now know more about how Millersville University was connected to the Carlisle Indian School. Professor Frank Vitale, Millersville's University Archivist and Special Collections librarian, is an expert on the history of the boarding schools, with a special focus on Carlisle and other Pennsylvania institutions. Last fall, he received a grant to help found the [Millersville Institutional Legacy Initiative](#) which fosters interdisciplinary collaborations between students and faculty to investigate Millersville's history and how it impacts the University today.

"For the first MILI research project, Bryanna Nase '27 and I worked together to identify 18 individuals who were essentially dual-enrolled between Millersville and Carlisle between the 1880s and 1810s," says Vitale. "These individuals are likely our first Native American students at Millersville and came here as a direct result of the assimilationist efforts of the federal government during that period."

The MILI also works to share the University's history with the campus community, organizing site visits to the Carlisle Indian School Campus for students, staff, and faculty; Archives Open House days; and more. This academic year, MILI is partnering with Dr. Nicole Pfannenstiel (English and World Languages) to run the Exploring Challenging Legacies series, which includes a documentary screening, book discussion group, and other programs to engage the campus with Millersville's history and legacy.

MILI continues to support research on Millersville's links to Carlisle and the Indian boarding school system, and new research initiatives focused on the history of LGBTQ+ groups on campus are ongoing. The MILI sponsors a student research intern every year, who selects their research topic related to the history of the University and works with Professor Vitale throughout their internship. "The goal with MILI is to encourage our campus community to engage with our history and understand how we can use our past to better inform our future," says Vitale. "We hope that these efforts continue to grow over time and that our campus becomes increasingly aware of our rich and complex history here at Millersville."

SPRING ATHLETICS AT THE 'VILLE

The spring semester will be exciting for Millersville Athletics. The men's and women's basketball teams are both in a close race for the PSAC East and wrestling, swimming and track and field are nearing their PSAC Championship events.

The last few weeks have been special for the basketball teams as Drew Stover, Montell Cooper, Kali March and Makiah Shaw all reached 1,000 career points. Only 44 men and 22 women in Millersville history have achieved this feat. Congratulations to this Marauder quartet!

Records have fallen in the pool this season with the team recording its best-ever finish at a PSAC Championships. Congratulations to Coach Evan Anthony on the team for this outstanding performance that included four school records this week.

The track team is readying for its PSAC Championships, and Darian Hauf is ranked No. 1 in the pole vault after breaking the indoor PSAC record. Megan Malecki has also cleared a NCAA qualifying mark in the event.

Amazingly, spring sports have also started the 2025 season. The baseball team is ranked No. 20 in the D2 Baseball poll, and it is a momentous season for the program with lights at Cooper Park, giving us night baseball for the first time in Millersville history. In May, we also host the PSAC Tournament for the first time. I also wish new lacrosse coach Mike Faith the best of luck in his first season guiding the program.

