

Millersville University

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

May
2024

May ushers in a short respite from the whirlwind activity that engulfs our campus in April and early May. The sun is shining brighter, and the air is warmer. Our graduates have celebrated their achievements, our students have moved out of our residence halls, and our halls and walkways have far fewer students rushing to their next class or activity. Although it seems to have arrived too quickly, we've come to the end of another successful academic year.

I am always struck by the bittersweet mix of relief and anticipation at this time because of the excitement of summer adventures and, the promise of a new academic year and the arrival of a new class of students in a few months. A couple of weeks after commencement, I miss our students and the energy of our bustling campus.

Despite the overcast weather outside, Pucillo Gym was full of smiles and cheers for the Spring Commencement Exercises. Across three ceremonies, 860 undergraduates and 210 graduate students received degrees from Millersville University.

Just after our commencement in early May, I traveled to Alabama and Virginia to celebrate commencements with family members. Our annual Employee Barbeque took place, and I want to reiterate my gratitude to our faculty and staff for your unwavering support of our students. We are so grateful for your positive impact on their lives, in the classroom and beyond.

To our May graduates, a heartfelt salute for your accomplishments. As I said in my commencement remarks, you are well prepared to leave Millersville and change the world!

In this issue of my monthly newsletter, you will learn more about recent revisions to the EPPIC value definitions and the introduction of our new institutional learning outcomes. You will also read about a new grant for our police department to help future recruitment efforts and our campus efforts to raise awareness about higher education opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities. We highlight an outstanding alumnus, Karen Ashkar Murley '63, for her philanthropic and service contributions, as well as faculty members and student-athletes reaching new heights.

I encourage you to relax and enjoy all that summer break offers. Stay safe and be well.

REVISED EPPIC VALUES

I am pleased to announce Millersville University's updated EPPIC values framework, which includes revised definitions and a new set of institutional learning outcomes. The institutional learning outcomes will allow

all university faculty and staff to unify how they support, measure and assess student learning. This work is the culmination of a campus-wide effort that began in response to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education 2020 Self-Study team report. A university team - chaired by Dr. Rachel Finley-Bowman and with members Dr. Bertha DeJesus, Dr. Scott Helfrich, Dr. Erin Moss, and J. Whitlow - participated in a design thinking institute to better define the Millersville experience. In 2022, they received a \$60,000 Redesign Accelerator Grant to support the project.

EPPIC VALUES FRAMEWORK						
<i>Mission We are a community dedicated to high quality education at an exceptional value.</i>						
<i>Vision We will inspire learners to change the world.</i>						
VALUES	EXPLORATION	PROFESSIONALISM	PUBLIC MISSION	INTEGRITY	INCLUSION	COMPASSION
DEFINITIONS	Millersville University fosters intellectual curiosity, engagement, collaboration, and creativity among our community, leading to innovation, discovery, and learning.	Millersville University models effective work practices and provides opportunities for professional development that emphasize critical thinking, collaboration, leadership, and self-care.	Millersville University cultivates and empowers local, regional, and global communities.	Millersville University embraces ethical and transparent decision-making, communication, scholarship, learning, and work.	Millersville University values a community where differences are welcomed, dialogue is respectful, and every individual feels a sense of belonging.	Millersville University fosters empathy for, and kindness towards, the human experience, leading to purposeful action.
INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES	Promote intellectual curiosity, engagement, and creativity, leading to innovation and discovery .	Demonstrate critical thinking, collaboration , leadership , self-care, and effective work practices .	Empower individuals to be active and responsive citizens .	Uphold ethical decision-making, communication, and work .	Strengthen community identity so, differences are welcomed and everyone feels they belong .	Choose kindness as the mindful foundation that guides purposeful action .

Two phases of project implementation followed in 2023, as expanded work groups of faculty, staff, and students updated EPPIC values definitions and created assessable institutional learning outcomes.

I would like to recognize and thank the faculty, staff, and students who participated in these work groups: Dr. Rachel Finley-Bowman (PI and project chair), Carlos Wiley (phase one co-chair), Dr. Carol Runge (phase two co-chair), Dr. Bertha DeJesus, Dr. Scott Helfrich, Dr. Erin Moss, J. Whitlow, Madison Wenig, Melissa Wardwell, Dr. Teresa Hartmann, Dr. Ankur Nandedkar, Dr. Margaret Mbindyo, Dr. Jennifer Burke, Andy Welaish, Owen Dougherty, Dr. Brent Horton, Dr. Sandy Deemer, Maria Perez Camacho, Tom Richardson, Dr. Carrie Smith, Emiyaril Alvarez, Dr. Karen Rice, Darlene Newman, Scott Anderson, Akilah Williams Valdez, J. Whitlow, Dr. Robyn Davis, Dr. Miriam Witmer, Allison Yarrow, Celeste DeJesus, Gregory Freedland, Paul Hill, Peter Anders, Dr. Kim McCollum-Clark, Krista Higham, Ron Wiafe, Rita Miller, Dr. Aileen Hower, Bradley Davis, Joni Klopp, Lucy McGloshen, and Jordan Branch.

I also want to convey my great appreciation to the many faculty, staff, and students who offered invaluable feedback to the work groups throughout the development process. As a result of your collective efforts, Millersville University will be more able to realize its vision, "We will inspire learners to change the world."

MUPD RECEIVES \$25K GRANT FOR RECRUITMENT

A \$25,000 grant recently awarded to Millersville University's police department from the Shapiro-Davis administration provides additional funding to recruit new candidates and keep officers. The police department will use the funds to give qualified candidates a one-time \$5,000 stipend.

The University currently has 14 sworn officers, and two of those officers were hired in January, returning the force to a full staff. Millersville's chief of police, Pete Anders, says, "We sought the grant as a hiring incentive to bridge the gap in our patrol officer pay versus the pay of officers in neighboring departments." According to Anders, the department may have three additional job openings during the next two years and will use the funds to help fill those positions.

Anders says that one of the biggest challenges police departments face while recruiting is pay. The average pay at Millersville is 25% below the pay of neighboring departments, and the University's police department and other municipalities must recruit from the same pool of candidates.

"We're like any other department in a small town," says Anders. "We have residents, guests and a multitude of events. We are a microcosm of the larger Lancaster County with the same issues. We comfort and aid people in an accident or mental health crisis and respond to active threats."

Since the campus community mainly consists of 18- —to 22-year-olds, Anders says MU officers are always looking for ways to engage with students positively and solve some of the minor problems that may be experienced on campus. Additionally, the University's police department regularly assists neighboring departments, including Millersville Borough and Manor Township.



ALUMNA NAMED NEWEST ECKERT HONOREE

Starting in 2015, the Susan C. and Gerald C. Eckert Service and Philanthropy Endowment Award has been given to a recipient to encourage others in philanthropic support and recognize a service commitment to Millersville University. This year's recipient, [Karen Ashkar Murley '63](#), was honored with an award ceremony on April 9 at the Eckert Art Gallery that celebrated her decades of support to scholarships, academic programs and more at Millersville. As a part of the recognition, Murley will choose a University program to receive the annual spendable income from the endowment.



The endowment award is selected based on exemplary service and philanthropy in advancing the mission of public higher education. Innovative ideas or practices assisting public higher education are considered part of the selection criteria. Murley is a member of Millersville's exclusive Fiat Lux Society, which honors the contributions of donors whose gifts and pledges total \$1 million or more.

"I am honored, and still in awe, to have been chosen as this year's award recipient. Thank you to Susan and Jerry for their forward thinking and for recognizing and generously supporting the very necessary habit of giving to support Millersville University's mission and its students," shares Murley. "My thanks to the advancement staff who continue to cordially and inventively guide my contributions in various ways for meaningful results. It has been my pleasure, frequently, to see and to learn from the positive outcomes of investing in our students – our future."

PROGRAM STRIVES TO EXPAND REPRESENTATION IN ECOLOGY FIELD

A game-changing grant was awarded to the Pennsylvania Chapter of The Wildlife Society during the 2022-2023 academic year. This financial boost is not just about dollars and cents; it resonates with a Millersville University professor because the grant fosters interactive field opportunities and transformative experiences specifically curated for systematically underrepresented minority students. The goal? To ignite a passion for ecology, natural resource studies and careers in conservation.

"My career goal is to work in the fields of wildlife ecology and natural resource management to improve conditions for wild plants and animals," says Dr. Aaron Haines, a professor of biology at Millersville University. "Having professional ecologists and natural resource managers from diverse backgrounds and life experiences produces more robust solutions to our natural resource problems."

The chapter collaborated with Millersville University and Delaware Valley University to use the grant. Together, they are actively recruiting underrepresented students and organizing various activities. The overarching objective is to facilitate a more seamless integration of these students into the wildlife field. The initiatives include wildlife excursions, professional workshops, field experiences, and conference participation. Through these efforts, the aim is to enhance the overall experience for underrepresented individuals, fostering a stronger connection within the dynamic realm of wildlife studies.

The grant helped cover travel expenses, food, entrance and registration fees. It also provided seed money for additional grant opportunities to further support opportunities for underrepresented minority students seeking to be involved in wildlife-related activities.

"My colleague Dr. Brent Horton was a great inspiration with his establishment of the Biology Mentoring Program on campus," says Haines. The BMP provides additional support for underrepresented biology students. Based on these experiences, I feel I could do more to help diversify the fields of wildlife ecology and natural resource management.



The inaugural excursion took place in the fall at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, a nonprofit refuge in central Pennsylvania focused on raptor conservation. The on-site workshop commenced with an informative introduction to raptors, revealing details about their behaviors and seasonal migrations. This hands-on experience aimed to provide participants with valuable insights into the world of raptors and enhance their understanding of conservation efforts at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary.

According to Haines, if students want to become more active in the outdoors, he recommends some of the great clubs on campus, such as the Conestoga Club. He also invites students to volunteer with his [Applied Conservation Lab](#).

CELEBRATE IPSE DAY AT THE 'VILLE

On May 1, Millersville University celebrated Inclusive Postsecondary Education Day, or IPSE Day, which raised awareness about higher education opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities.

IPSE Day is organized by Think College, an initiative based at the Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts Boston, dedicated to improving inclusive education nationwide. According to the organization, only 6% of colleges and universities in the United States offer opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities. Millersville University is proud to be among the 6% nationally and is dedicated to the future of our Integrated Studies initiative.



Students enrolled in Integrated Studies engage in academics and career exploration and build relationships at the University. The curriculum allows students in the program to immerse themselves in undergraduate courses, internships, student employment, student housing and participate in campus life.

Antonia Little, a student majoring in integrated studies at MU, says that her experience in the program has been great. "I've gotten involved with the campus radio station and made some great friends."

She continues, "My favorite memory so far has been meeting my friends because they are still some of my best friends even after graduation."

Ashton Lagos, another student majoring in integrated studies, says he's also had a great experience at the University and loves that he's been able to make friends and work on campus.

Lagos notes that it is important to raise awareness of IPSE Day. "IPSE Day means that people with disabilities get a chance to go to college. I think that everyone deserves that chance. I get to go to college like my sister and cousins. All people should be able to have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity when they go to college and have success in life."

“Inclusive Postsecondary Education to me means that everyone is welcome to learn in the same place with no problem,” adds Little.

[Learn more about Integrated Studies at Millersville University.](#)

ATHLETICS BREAKS RECORDS

It has been a record-setting few weeks in Millersville Athletics, from softball and baseball to golf and track and field.

The softball team’s Aleese Angelo recently set new program records for doubles and career hits, while pitcher Alex Schaeffer set a program record for career strikeouts.

The baseball team’s Jeff Sabater broke the single-season record for stolen bases with his 41st of the season. The record had stood since 1987. Sabater leads the NCAA in stolen bases, regardless of division, and pitcher Alex Mykut leads Division II in ERA. The team is ranked No. 9 in Division II and No. 1 in the NCBWA Atlantic Region Poll.

The men's and women's golf teams have both won a tournament this spring and tied program records with five tournament wins.

Track and field pole vaulter Darian Hauf set school, stadium and event records at the Millersville Metrics on April 9.

Congratulations to all of our student-athletes!

