

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

This is a special weekend. It is a time for all of us to sit back and reflect on the wonderful women who have helped shape our lives and values. I feel fortunate that I had loving grandmothers who were born at the turn of the 20th Century. My maternal grandmother was a child when she and her parents arrived in the United States from Sweden, bringing many wonderful cultural traditions and customs. My other grandmother was a suffragette with a strong sense of pride in her family and nation. My childhood was influenced by a bright and protective mother, coaching me as I was the only other female in the family. My hope is that when we all look back, we can see loving caregivers who influenced our lives. We are often impacted by teachers, aunts, and neighbors who became mother figures through their actions. I hope all of you have known these special people in your lives.

Today the COVID-19 Response Team met to discuss organizational steps the committee is taking to address the many pending issues facing our campuses, such as faculty, staff and patient screening processes in our clinics, gradual reopening of our clinics and academic halls, and policies and procedures needed when faculty, staff and students return to campus. We also focused on one new and evolving issue on our Downers Grove Campus...wild turkeys.

Announcement

- At the end of this seventh week of our public health pandemic, I am happy to report Midwestern University has not had one employee, staff, student or vendor test positive in two weeks. The steps and actions all of you have taken have indeed flattened our curve. I am so pleased that our academic family has remained healthy. Thank you!
- During all the weeks the employees and students have sheltered-in-place in the State of Illinois, our empty campus has become home to many wild Tom Turkeys. We have always been a haven for deer, song birds, squirrels and ground hogs; we now have new inhabitants in the form of an outbreak of large aggressive turkeys. Many have been spotted knocking on building entrances, harassing staff members, and even perching on the railings outside Commons Hall, not allowing anyone to enter or leave the facility.
- If you are on the Downers Grove campus, please be aware these large wild turkeys can be aggressive and are not afraid of humans. If you are a student, faculty or staff member on the campus, please take extreme caution and stay away from the large birds. You are welcome to call security or facilities to help you scare off these new tenants. Please do not try to remove them yourself. We understand the entire western suburbs are inundated with turkeys, and we are not alone in trying to keep our community safe.
- An external vendor has been hired to help us encourage the turkeys to leave our property. We have allowed dogs to roam campus to help scare them off. I hope this problem can end shortly. Please do not feed them as this will encourage them to linger and invite their friends.

This is a very unusual Mother's Day weekend. Many of us cannot be with our dear families. Mother's Day is traditionally filled with family, friends, brunches and parties. This year the celebrations may be held using Microsoft Teams, Zoom and FaceTime gatherings, all of us making the most of this time, spreading joy to others. For those with a home still filled with children, may they make you breakfast in bed, honor you with hugs, and say a special thank you Momma!

I hope our entire Midwestern University community has a wonderful weekend; and as you reflect on influential people in your lives, may you be filled with a sense of peace and meaning. My weekend will be filled with remembering the voices of wisdom that quietly whispered in my ear and reminded me that they loved me, many years ago.

Happy Mother's Day.

Be well.

Dr. G.