

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged all of us to have strong minds, great hearts and ready hands to make a difference. Because of our many dedicated and willing volunteers who contributed hundreds of hours in our Glendale and Downers Grove Vaccination Centers, we have fulfilled the mission of vaccinating over 10,500 people thus far. This figure represents an important milestone that should make everyone feel very proud of attaining since our Centers opened a short time ago.

Through the first 8 weeks of our Vaccination Center in Glendale and the first 5 weeks of our Vaccination Center in Downers Grove, we have provided over 10,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses to our students, faculty, staff, and patients. To date, 54% of our students, faculty, and staff are reporting they are fully vaccinated, which is defined as being more than 14 days following the receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series or more than 14 days following the receipt of a single-dose vaccine. We expect this number to continue to grow as we continue to administer second doses to our students, faculty, and staff.

Scientists tell us that when enough people become immune to a disease, significant spread of that disease becomes unlikely, and the entire community benefits from that protection. Researchers believe that for a community to be protected from COVID-19, approximately 70% of the members of that community must have immunity. We are rapidly approaching this 70% vaccination goal.

In order for everyone to track the vaccination rate throughout our campuses, we have added a Midwestern vaccine tracker to your homepage at <https://online.midwestern.edu>. This information will update in real time and provide information about the vaccination rate on our campuses. If you have not yet been vaccinated for COVID-19, please consider making an appointment at our Vaccination Center in Glendale or Downers Grove to protect yourself, your family, and the Midwestern University community.

#### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Vaccination Cards

As vaccinations have become widely available, the simple, white CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card has grown in importance. Some popular vacation destinations, cruise lines and public venues are beginning to require travelers and event attendees to provide a proof of vaccination against COVID-19, and making a vaccination record available at the point of entry or for a reservation. Therefore, please safeguard your card. If you do lose your card, you can always download your health record at your state agency, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Many of you have taken a picture of your CDC card to have a digital copy, while others are laminating the card to keep it safe. Organizations like Staples, Office Max and Office Depot offer free lamination of your vaccination card, following the second dose of Moderna or Pfizer. Our campus Copy Centers will also provide this service at no charge to Midwestern University faculty, staff and students.

As a word of caution, please do not post your card on social media as it does contain personal information and can be copied by forgers. As these CDC cards are now considered prized possessions, please do not share pictures of them in a public forum.

#### Class of 2021 Closing Ceremony Update

Early next week, all Colleges will be announcing the actual times of the Closing Ceremonies for their graduates this spring. In addition, these dates and times will be posted on the Midwestern University

Graduation web page. The official Virtual Commencement Ceremony will be available online so families and friends of the graduates can view them together and participate in the hooding of their graduate on Friday, May 28, 2021. This is the official graduation date for all spring 2021 graduates.

Our in-person Closing Ceremonies are designed to bring graduates back to campus in order to allow them to see each one another prior to starting their new careers and entering residency programs. The Closing Ceremony will also allow the faculty to share their best wishes as the graduates are congratulated by their Academic Dean and myself. We will have these events livestreamed for families to enjoy and view at home.

#### Diversity and Inclusion Activities

A number of new and innovative programs are being introduced in the weeks to come. The Students for One Health and the National Optometric Student Association are presenting Low Value Care and the High Value for Health, on April 15, 2021 from 12:00 – 1:00 P.M. MST. Please contact Student Services for how to register for this the event.

On May 18, 2021, the Pharmacy Faculty/Student Relations Diversity Task Force will host a very special presentation by Mrs. Rena Finder, a Holocaust and Schindler's List Survivor, who will discuss incidents of bigotry and hatred across the globe. This presentation is open to all faculty, staff and students, and begins at 10:00 A.M. MST and 12:00 CST.

May this upcoming weekend provide everyone with an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful spring weather. Tomorrow at the Glendale Campus Vaccination Center, we have a very special day planned to provide 150 members of the community and Special Olympics Arizona with a vaccine. Approximately 40 faculty, staff and student volunteers will be on hand to make everyone feel welcome as we reach out and make a difference in the lives of so many special individuals. My deepest appreciation to all of you who are volunteering to help us make Operation Hope a success.

Be well.

Dr. G.