

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

As I am writing this update, we are quickly approaching the middle of October. And while our colleagues and students on the Glendale campus don't have a typical fall of watching leaves change color, pulling out their winter sweaters, and escaping the heat, our Downers Grove faculty and staff have seen "frost on the pumpkin" a few mornings this past week. Throughout Midwestern University, there seems to be an awareness that autumn is quietly approaching and before any of us are ready, the holidays will be upon us. We start with Halloween by creating costumes and handing out candy, all while enjoying football games and looking forward to Thanksgiving feasts. Then shortly thereafter, we bring this year to a close by celebrating the December holidays, enjoying our traditions with dear family and friends. As the old saying goes, "they will be here before you know it."

This year the holidays will be different as we learn to celebrate in novel and virtual ways. I am pleased to announce that our Offices of Student Services have finalized plans for the student Halloween programs. On our Downers Grove campus, we are inviting the community to a Halloween Drive Thru where students in masks and gloves will be distributing candy to the community. Admission is a simple donation of a canned good to be provided to the People's Resource Center. On the Glendale campus, our faculty and staff can reserve a take-home bag of crafts, favors and treats for their children. These "Safer Halloween" gatherings allow our students to help the campus community bring festivities to families that may not be comfortable with the traditional Trick o' Treating. Faculty and staff are invited to decorate their offices to usher in the first of our fall celebrations. Let's make it fun on campus.

This past week we have had three students on the Downers Grove campus and one student from the Glendale campus test positive for COVID-19. We also have one faculty staff member test positive on the Downers Grove campus. Fortunately, the students are on clinical rotations and have not been on our campuses. I am once again urging all of you to follow the required protocols of washing your hands frequently, wearing a face mask when around others, and not coming to campus if you are ill. We need everyone to be honest on their Daily Health Screening. If a student is ill or quarantined and cannot come to campus, the academic dean/program director should be notified in order to determine if any accommodations are needed.

If a faculty or staff member is working on campus in their own office, or seated behind a Plexiglas shield, you are not required to keep your facial mask on all day. However, if anyone approaches your office, your desk, or passes you in a hallway, you must be wearing a mask as outlined in the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention Guidelines. An alarming study was released by The Economist this past week that indicated a worldwide drop in compliance of these three important factors: avoidance of touching objects in public places, frequency of washing your hands, and staying away from busy public places. Let's not be part of this alarming trend. As members of the Midwestern University community, our careful abidance of these factors indicates our efforts are working and together we can continue to keep our numbers down

5-Step Plan for Diversity and Inclusion

- The Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine has many active initiatives that have made significant changes to curriculum, student and faculty engagement and education. The Social Equity Task Force selected eight individuals who will be student Ambassadors to all of the various Diversity and Inclusion Task Forces to coordinate all the college projects and proposals.

The Community Outreach Task Force has been formed to create opportunities for students to serve in underserved, racially diverse areas of Chicago and mentor high school students. This is separate from the Task Force on Recruitment/Pipeline whose purpose is recruiting more underrepresented minority students to medical school. A faculty development day has been established with an impressive panel with the Director of the Institute of Medicine, Chicago and the Senior Director, Rush Community Service Initiative Program of the Office of Community Health Equity and Engagement. Two webinars have been conducted on both Microaggressions and Implicit Bias in Academic Medicine and Racial Healing Circle series. My thanks to the students, faculty and staff of CCOM for their many efforts to help Midwestern University meet the goals of our 5-Step Plan.

- The Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine Outreach Task Force is sponsoring a live WebEx meeting with William D. Anderson, D.O., an African American physician who attended osteopathic medical school in the early 1950's, marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the 1960's, and served later in his career as the President of the American Osteopathic Association. The Outreach Task Force will host Dr. Anderson on November 4, 2020 as he discusses pathways and opportunities for greater diversity and inclusion. The AZCOM Outreach Task Force will extend an invitation to the campus community to attend this important program.
- We have formalized our new *Diversity and Inclusion Team* to better serve our campus communities. On the Glendale campus the team includes Ms. Julie High Horse, Assistant Dean of Student Activities and Ms. Angelica Cervantes Alvarez, Senior Human Resource Specialist. On the Downers Grove campus, joining Ms. Catherine Rent, Manager of Residence Life Student Services is Ms. Janise N. Davis, Human Resource Compensation and Classification Specialist. The purpose of this team is to coordinate and guide all of our Diversity and Inclusion activities and programs currently being implemented in our colleges and departments. This new Diversity and Inclusion Team is comprised of four highly respected and dedicated members of our community. Please join me in congratulating them on this new and important role.

As the autumn season can usher in flu season, I wish to remind everyone to take care of their health and loved ones. Please consider getting a flu shot and take advantage of the many healthy opportunities we have to eat well, take walks and listen and care for those around you. As a reminder, if you are concerned about your well-being or those around you, please reach out to our 24 hour counseling programs. Students can call toll-free 1-877-351-7889, or e-mail AskSAP@aetna.com, school ID is MWU. Faculty and staff can contact the Employee Assistance Plan toll-free at 888 -293-6948, text "MSEAP" to 53342, or at <https://www.workhealthlife.com/standard3>.

As the seasons change, let us embrace each fall day and be grateful for all that we have, and all that we aspire to be.

Be well.

Dr. G.