DEAR COLLEAGUES,

Happy Holidays! As we approach the holiday season, I want to remind everyone to take some time to reflect on that which you are thankful for and to not take things for granted as we so easily do in everyday life.

This edition of our quarterly newsletter provides you with a lot of information that impacts you in many ways. At the town hall meeting for faculty and staff on November 17, we shared information about our new strategic plan, the presidential search, and our annual community conference, which will be held next month. We also just completed our open enrollment period for calendar year 2022 and were able to present some positive additions to our current plans, including lower costs, lower deductibles, vibrant wellness initiatives, and vision coverage within the plan.

Perhaps most importantly, we are focused on our U-Matter initiatives and presented some very positive actions as a result, which you can read about in this edition of the quarterly Our People newsletter. We pride ourselves on empowering you—our employees—and focusing on ways to better recognize you for a job well done. You bring such tremendous value to the college each day and the U-Matter program is just the beginning of our promise to invest in our employees.

In this season of gratitude, I am thankful for your hard work. I hope you are looking forward to a very restful winter break filled with the love of family and friends.

Sincerely,

Kelley Williams
Associate Vice President for Human Resources

Save the Date: Holiday Party

At this festive time of year, let’s be sure to take some time to share in the joy of the season with our Ursinus family. Our annual year-end party will be held in Upper Wismer on Monday, December 20, from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m. Please join your faculty and staff colleagues at this wonderful annual event.

The winter holiday break will begin following the party on December 20. As announced by President Marsteller at the faculty/staff town hall on November 17, the break has been extended to include Tuesday, December 21, and Monday, January 3, giving you two additional days to enjoy with family and loved ones. For those staff members who are required to work during the newly extended holiday break, you may schedule other days off at more convenient times with your supervisor.

Please indicate if you are going to the party or not by visiting: https://go.ursinus.edu/HolidayParty.
Investing in our Employees

These past two years have been a challenge. Amid uncertainty and change, you’ve continued to show unwavering dedication to Ursinus and have been one of the many reasons we’ve continued to thrive. We’ve often spoken about how we’re committed to investing in our employees as our most important asset. Through U-Matter, a new initiative first introduced by President Marsteller in November, we’re focusing on new ways to recognize your hard work.

• The Board of Trustees has approved a well-deserved 2 percent salary pool increase that will go into effect in January.
• Beginning in January, the college will host monthly social gatherings for faculty and staff—a chance to reconnect with friends and colleagues across campus.
• As a small token of our appreciation, all benefit-eligible employees will receive a Barnes & Noble gift card. Take advantage of all the offerings in the bookstore in the Schellhase Commons.

Ursinus is also delighted to now be part of the PAISBOA Health Benefit Trust, which consists of 140 independent universities and schools that collectively purchase health insurance for better bargaining power. Thank you for making this year’s open enrollment period a success. For those of you who have opted into the college’s health benefits program, there are a few things to keep in mind as we look forward to the new year:

• You will soon receive new ID cards in the mail. Remember, prescription drug coverage will now be administered by CVS/Caremark, but you can continue to use your pharmacy of choice.
• The college will continue to support employees by funding the second half of the deductible through the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA). We will continue to use the Harrison Group for both the HRA and the Health Savings Account (HSA).
• The new arrangement provides greater stability each year in the annual renewal process and protects us from high claims costs.

There is much more to come! Stay tuned for details about more exciting U-Matter initiatives!

The Community Conference: A Focus on Our Well-Being

Save the date for the 2022 Community Conference, “Well-being: Yours, Mine & Ours!” On Wednesday, January 26, faculty, staff, and students are invited to join in on an important conversation about the six dimensions of wellness. Our aim is to improve our own personal and professional well-being as we work to promote healthier lifestyles and work/life balance.

The conference will begin at 8:30 a.m. with a continental breakfast and the program will follow from 9 a.m. to 11:50 a.m. and include:

• Welcome from President Marsteller
• Keynote (Minding Your Mond: A Personal Story of Hope and Healing)
• Strategies for enhanced well-being within six dimensions for students, faculty, and staff
• Small group discussions focused on personal and professional strategies for improved well-being
• Campus-wide strategies to improve overall health developed from the American College Health Association’s College Health Assessment

A special luncheon for faculty and staff will follow from noon to 1 p.m. and include the presentation of our annual staff awards.
Creating our 
Beloved Community

Martin Luther King Jr. spoke passionately about his end goal—the creation of a beloved community. This academic year, Ursinus began its own Beloved Community program to bring greater awareness to the activities and programs that engage difference, promote our community values of creating a welcoming environment, and respond in thoughtful ways to the Quest core curriculum.

The Beloved Community on our campus includes signature annual events such as MLK Week, the Beloved Community Interfaith Service, the Conversations Across Difference series, Disability Awareness Day, and Pride Week, along with many events planned, sponsored, and promoted by groups throughout the Ursinus campus.

During the spring 2022 semester, we hope you will join us for MLK Week January 17-22. Visit the MLK Week website for information, including:

**MONDAY, JANUARY 17**
- MLK Day of Service
- Continuing our partnership with the Perkiomen Valley School District, students form the college and PVSD will participate together in service activities, lightning talks, and reflection.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19**
- Beloved Community Night featuring 42 (Lenfest Theater, Kaleidoscope Performing Arts Center). Beginning at 4:30 p.m., 42 tells the story of Jackie Robinson and his experience breaking barriers as the first African American man to play baseball professionally at the major league level.

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 20**
- Lightning Talks: Join us for short talks from faculty, staff, and students on relevant topics drawn from personal experiences and research.

**We also hope you will join us for the following special events:**

**A TALK BY DEBORAH LIPSTADT: “ANTISEMITISM: HERE AND NOW”**
**February 1, 7 p.m., Bomberger Auditorium**

The 2018 murder of 11 Jews at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh represented the greatest act of violent antisemitism on American soil. Where is all this hatred coming from? Based on her most recent book, Antisemitism: Here and Now, award-winning author Deborah Lipstadt gives us a penetrating and provocative analysis of the hate that will not die, focusing on its current, virulent incarnations on both the political right and left. Co-sponsored by Scholars for Peace in the Middle East.

**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BELOVED COMMUNITY INTERFAITH CELEBRATION**
**February 6, 3 p.m., Bomberger Auditorium**

The annual Interfaith celebration of the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. and the Beloved Community.

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**Nominate Your Peers:**

**The Flora A. Tortorelli Staff Service Award**

Professor Victor Tortorelli and his wife, Kathryn, established an endowed prize fund in memory of Vic’s mother, who worked for many years with great pride, but not much compensation, as an hourly employee of a school in the Bronx, New York. The Flora A. Tortorelli Staff Service Award is limited to hourly (non-exempt) employees of Ursinus who have a minimum of 10 years of service. Part-time service will be prorated to full-time equivalence. A person may receive this award only once.

**The Laughlin Distinguished Administrator Award**

Henry P. Laughlin ’38 and his wife, M. Page Laughlin, established an endowed prize fund in 1979 to support a series of awards presented to faculty, staff and students. The Distinguished Administrator Award is presented to a leading member of our salaried (exempt) staff with a minimum of three years of service and who has made significant contributions to the college above and beyond their regular responsibilities. A person may receive this award only once.

Please make your nominations on the staff awards webpage by Friday, December 17. A list of eligible employees for each award, developed from the college’s employment records, is included on the linked webpage. Vice presidents of the college are not eligible for the awards.
Welcome New Colleagues!

We are proud to welcome our new faculty and staff colleagues to campus! What follows is a list of new employees as of October 1, 2021.

- Tommy Armstrong, digital communications specialist (college communications)
- Laura Boyle, campus safety officer (campus safety)
- Kevin Clark, assistant coach, men’s and women’s track and field (athletics)
- Matthew Coleman, administrative support (modern languages)
- Bridget DiCave, assistant coach, women’s basketball (athletics)
- Erin Edwards, social media and digital marketing specialist (admission)
- Christine Funchion, associate director of college events and signature programs (advancement)
- Nadine Gabbadon, assistant director of institutional research (institutional research and effectiveness)
- Matt Hagy, director of athletic communications (athletics)
- Piper Harsch, admission counselor (admission)
- Tawny Jackson, administrative coordinator (enrollment)
- Justin Jones, assistant director of athletic communications (athletics)
- Rachel Kennedy, assistant swimming coach and aquatics director (athletics)
- Christopher Meng, assistant coach, men’s and women’s track and field (athletics)
- Cale Nelson, director of human resources (human resources)
- Dominic Nocito, network engineer (LIT)
- Kristen Richter, assistant women’s basketball coach (athletics)
- Megan Riefer, administrative support (politics and international relations)
- Vicky Riego de Dios, administrative support (music)
- John Solewin, senior associate director of admission (admission)
- Vivian Viera, associate director of annual giving (advancement)

Retirements

Ursinus would like to extend its most heartfelt thanks to Cathy Bogusky, who retired on Sept. 23. We are grateful for her years of dedicated service to the college. Please join us in offering our congratulations!

Remote Work Policy Update

Earlier this year, it was announced that a new remote work policy would be introduced to employees this semester. However, given the health of the region and the many variables and unknowns regarding COVID-19, it is the recommendation of the Virus Task Force to maintain the current hybrid approach to working on campus and at home. An official policy will be introduced in 2022.

Reminder: Mid-Year Check-ins

All supervisors should be sure to schedule time with their direct reports in January to review goals and make sure goals are in alignment the remainder of the academic year!

HAPPY Holidays