



COLLEGE OF
MOUNT SAINT VINCENT

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

January 28, 2022

Dear Mount Community,

As we wrap up the first week of classes and anticipate a snowy weekend, I want to send a quick note of appreciation with brief reminders. When speaking with several other college/university presidents in the region in recent weeks, there has been a sense of anticipation with hesitation about how the beginning of a new semester would look with the continued impact of COVID-19. Several shared with me their decisions to delay the start of their semester or start online with a phased process for in-person learning. Consistently, I shared the College of Mount Saint Vincent's plans with my colleagues with confidence that our community would commit to the health and safety of themselves and others. Why could I be so confident? Because I have seen this community's authentic living of our mission and values since I arrived at the Mount a little over a year ago. I have seen respect for human dignity and commitment to our common humanity in many different ways over the past year, and yet again this week, when we fully returned to our in-person learning at the Mount.

Whereas we made the decision, like most other colleges and universities in the area, not to reinstate the dashboard of COVID-19 cases, our full return to the Mount required either submission of negative COVID-19 test results or participation in pool testing. Compliance for this requirement has been very high. Beyond the many students and employees who submitted negative tests to return to campus, I am pleased to share with you that we had a total of 381 students and employees participate in pool testing on Monday and Tuesday of this week and the virus was only detected in a total of four instances—a 1% positivity rate. These results are outstanding! As you have seen in notices sent via email and posted on social media, we will continue pool testing in the coming weeks, and I strongly encourage you all to join me in participating.

I thank the many of you who continue to properly wear your masks—covering your nose and mouth—and encourage those of you who are not covering your noses when wearing your masks to please do so. Given the airborne nature of the virus, covering *both* your nose and mouth ensures you are protecting your respiratory system. If you would like a KN95 mask, you can stop by Student Affairs, the Pavilion, or Human Resources. Finally, as a reminder, if you are eligible for receiving your COVID-19 booster shot and have not yet, I strongly encourage you to do so.

As a community committed to the health of ourselves and each other, we will continue to remain safe and together this Spring Semester!

Thank you for doing your part to protect our 'Phin Fam at this #RightPlaceOnTheRiver!

Best,

Susan R. Burns, Ph.D.
President