

Monday Message from President Walker



Bennington College - Laura Walker <president@bennington.edu>

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BENNINGTON COLLEGE

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Bennington community,

What an extraordinary couple weeks it has been here at Bennington. I have so enjoyed the presentations of senior work—from theatre productions outside on the lawn to screenings and visual arts installations at Usdan to presentations in animation. The ambition and breadth of our students' pursuits have been on full view!

This is our last week of Spring Term and our last Monday Message for the academic year. I welcome feedback about these messages. Have you found them useful? Do you have suggestions of how they could be improved?

As we prepare for summer, student move-out, and 2021 Commencement, I wanted to focus on a few critical reminders for this final week.

COVID-19 Update

- There are NO cases of COVID on campus. Don't forget to upload proof of your vaccination! We have easy instructions for [employees](#) and [students](#).
- And just a reminder that, although the CDC and State of Vermont have relaxed some of their masking guidelines for vaccinated people, our policies will remain in place until at least Commencement. We will let you know when this changes.

COVID-19 in India: Bennington Students Step Up

- I am pleased to pass along this news from student Nirmohi Belvalkar: Bennington students have together raised \$500 to support the [Swasth Oxygen for India campaign](#). Thank you to Nirmohi for organizing this effort at a time when need is so critical in India.
- Anyone who would still like to donate can do so [here](#).

Congratulations to our Class of 2021!

- I am so excited for my first Bennington commencement and to celebrate all that you have accomplished in your time here.
- Details about our 2021 Commencement Speaker, the schedule, and logistics for guests can all be found [here](#).
- We are monitoring the weather closely and will let you know by Friday of any necessary logistical changes to Saturday's Conferring of Degrees ceremony.
- **And be sure to check out this [round-up](#) of the incredible work our graduates have done in their time here at Bennington. There is so much to celebrate.**

On the Violence in Gaza and Israel

- As we monitor the cease-fire in Israel and Gaza, we condemn the violence and mourn the deaths of Palestinians and Israelis. We received the student petition and I have met with the four students who led this thoughtful effort, and we discussed forming a working group to craft recommendations for me regarding Bennington's partnerships in the Middle East. I have asked Noah Coburn to lead this working group of students, faculty and staff.

I want to thank everyone for a successful and productive academic year under extraordinary circumstances. Although we are pausing these messages for the summer, you can still expect regular communications from us as the need arises.

Have a great week,

Laura Walker
President